



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

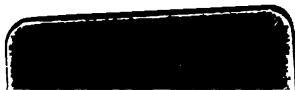
About Google Book Search

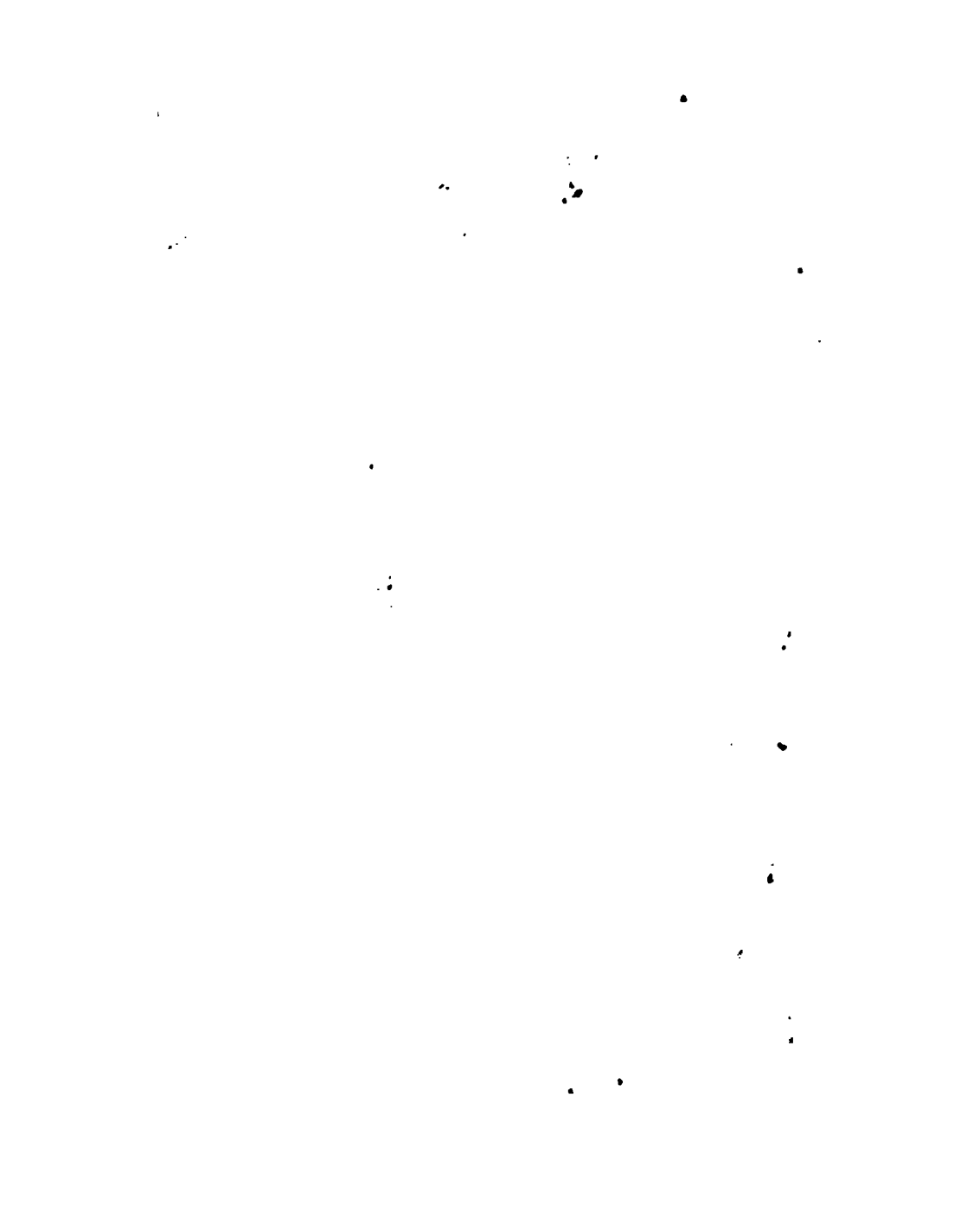
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





600017949-





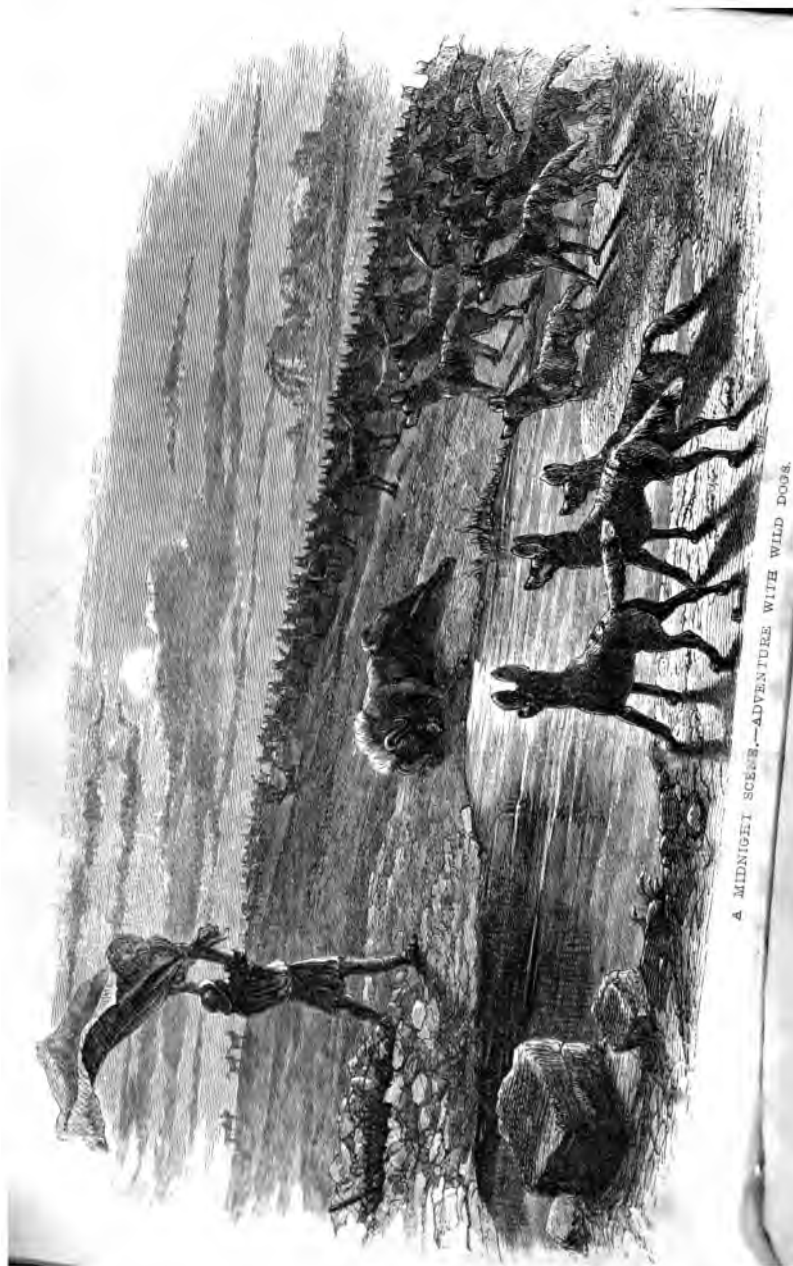
10

11

12







A MIDNIGHT SCENE.—ADVENTURE WITH WILD DOGS.

The Lion Hunter of South Africa.

FIVE YEARS' ADVENTURES
IN THE
FAR INTERIOR
OF
SOUTH AFRICA;

WITH NOTICES OF THE NATIVE TRIBES AND SAVAGE ANIMALS.

BY ROUALEYN GORDON CUMMING, Esq.,
OF ALTYRE.

A NEW EDITION, REVISED AND CONDENSED.

With Woodcuts.



16

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1856.

203 d. 200

LONDON : PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET,
AND CHURCH LANE.

P R E F A C E.

~~~~~

AS the reader who purposes following me through the five adventurous years I spent in the untrodden wilds of Southern Africa might like to know something of my previous career, I may briefly state that the early portion of my life was spent in the county of Moray, where a love of sport and natural history was early engendered in my mind, and became stronger and more deeply rooted every year. Salmon-fishing and roe-stalking were my favourite amusements; and, during these early wanderings by wood and stream, this strong love of sport and admiration of Nature in her wildest and most attractive forms became with me an all-absorbing feeling, and my greatest possible enjoyment was to pass whole days and many a summer night in solitude, where, undisturbed, I might contemplate the silent grandeur of the forest and the ever-varying beauty of the scenes around. Long before I went to Eton I took pride in the goodly array of hunting trophies which hung around my room.

In 1839 I sailed for India, to join my regiment, the 4th Madras Light Cavalry. Touching at the Cape of Good Hope, I had an opportunity of hunting several of the smaller antelopes, and obtained a foretaste of the splendid sport I was in after years so abundantly to enjoy. In India



I procured a great number of specimens of natural history, and laid the foundation of a collection which has since swelled to gigantic proportions.\* Finding the climate did not agree with me, I retired from the service and returned home, where, resuming my old hunting habits, I was enabled, through the kindness of a wide circle of friends, to follow my favourite pursuit of deer-stalking so successfully that I speedily found myself in possession of a fine collection of select heads from most of the Scottish deer-forests. But growing weary of hunting in a country where the game was strictly preserved, and where the continual presence of keepers and foresters took away half the charm of the chase, and longing once more for the freedom of nature, and the life of the wild hunter—so far preferable to that of the mere sportsman—I resolved to visit the rolling prairies and rocky mountains of the Far West, where my nature would find congenial sport with the bison, the wapiti, and the elk. In the hope of realising this wish, I obtained a commission in the Royal Veteran Newfoundland Companies, but I speedily discovered that the prospect of getting from the barrack-square would be small, and that I should have little chance of playing the Nimrod whilst attached to this corps. I accordingly effected an exchange into the Cape Riflemen, and in 1843 found myself once more in the country upon whose frontiers dwelt those vast herds of game which had so often fired my imagination, and made me long to revisit it.

Immediately upon landing at the Cape I marched with my division of the army of occupation, under the command

\* Which may now be seen in my South African Museum, No. 232, Piccadilly, London.

of Colonel Somerset, into the country of the Amaponda Caffres, where we lay for some time under canvas, and where our principal amusements were quail-shooting and throwing the assagai. Being disappointed in my expectations, and there being at that time no prospect of fighting, I made up my mind to sell out of the army, and to penetrate into the interior farther than the foot of civilised man had yet trodden—to those vast regions which would afford abundant food for the gratification of the passion of my youth—the collecting of hunting trophies and objects of interest in science and natural history: in this I ultimately succeeded to my heart's desire.

With regard to my African adventures the following pages must speak for themselves. Let me here state, however, that I was the first to penetrate into the interior of the Bamangwato country, and that my axe and spade pioneered the way which others have since followed. I should have pushed on still farther had I not been prevented by the great losses I experienced in cattle and horses.

During the many years I spent in the wilderness, my waggon was my only home. Even this I often deserted; and alone, or attended only by savages, proceeded on distant hunting expeditions, leaving my few followers encamped around my baggage. Days and nights, on these occasions, have I passed in my solitary hunting-hole, near some drinking-place, watching the majestic carriage of the lion, the sagacious actions of the elephant, and the curious instincts of the countless varieties of game that have passed within a few yards of me, quite unaware of the proximity of *man*. Whatever on those occasions I wit-

nessed worthy of attention, I noted in my journal whilst the impression was yet fresh in my memory—from this journal the following work is almost literally transcribed. Written under such circumstances, the reader will not look for the graces of style, for the hand, wearied all day with grasping the rifle, is not the best suited for wielding the pen. If I have in simple language given pleasure to the sportsman, or added one page to the natural history of Southern Africa, or to our knowledge of its tribes, I shall think myself amply repaid for my many wanderings and watchings in a wild and savage land.

*Altyre, June, 1850.*

# CONTENTS.

|                                                                                                                           | Page |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| PREFACE .. .. .                                                                                                           | iii  |
| Chap.                                                                                                                     |      |
| I. TRADING AT THE CAPE — PREPARATIONS FOR HUNTING<br>— CAPE WAGGONS — OUTFIT — SERVANTS — SOUTH<br>AFRICAN FLORA .. .. .  | 1    |
| II. COMMENCEMENT OF MY JOURNEYINGS — INSPANNING —<br>THE START — CHANGE OF ROUTE — THE HONEY-BIRD                         | 15   |
| III. DE BRUIN'S POORT — THE BLACK KORAN — GREAT FISH<br>RIVER — CRADOCK — SPRING-BOK SHOOTING .. .. .                     | 30   |
| IV. FROM HENDRICK STRYDOM'S TO COLESBERG — LOCUSTS —<br>NIGHT-HUNTING — WILDEBEEST-SHOOTING .. .. .                       | 48   |
| V. FROM COLESBERG ACROSS THE DESERT — LION AND BUF-<br>FALO FIGHT — HUNTING THE GEMSBOK — RAIDS OF<br>THE BUSHMEN .. .. . | 60   |
| VI. HUNTING IN THE DESERT — OSTRICH-SHOOTING — LIFE<br>IN CAMP. — MIGRATION OF SPRINGBOKS — BEER VLEY                     | 72   |
| VII. BEER VLEY — GREAT ORANGE RIVER — STINK VONTEYN<br>— GRIQUAS AND BASTARDS .. .. .                                     | 83   |
| VIII. STINK VONTEYN TO THE VAAL RIVER AND BACK — WILD<br>DOGS .. .. .                                                     | 95   |
| IX. RIET RIVER — MIRAGE — BLESBOK — CURIOUS FACTS<br>CONCERNING LIONS .. .. .                                             | 106  |
| X. BOER ENCAMPMENT — FEARFUL ENCOUNTER WITH A<br>LIONESS — BATTLE OF SCHWART COPPICE .. .. .                              | 121  |
| XI. MOTITO — THE BECHUANA TRIBES — BAKATLA — DR.<br>LIVINGSTON — RHINOCEROS-HUNTING .. .. .                               | 137  |
| XII. BOAR-HUNT — CAMELOPARD — NATIVE CONSPIRACY TO<br>PREVENT MY FARTHER PROGRESS .. .. .                                 | 152  |

| Chap.                                                                                                                                                                         | Page |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| XIII. THE GUIDES TRY TO MISLEAD ME — WANDERING NEGRO-ANAS POINT OUT MY RIGHT COURSE — LAST IN THE FOREST .. .. .                                                              | 167  |
| XIV. BAMANGWATO MOUNTAINS — GIRAFFES — ELEPHANT-HUNT — SICOMY, KING OF BAMANGWATO .. .. .                                                                                     | 177  |
| XV. TAKE LEAVE OF SICOMY — DIGGING FOR WATER — ROAN ANTELOPE — SICOMY'S CAMP AGAIN — BULL ELEPHANT                                                                            | 196  |
| XVI. ELEPHANT-SPOORING WITH THE NATIVES — BULL ELEPHANT SLAIN — MY INTERPRETER DISMISSED — A LIONESS BAGGED AT ONE SHOT .. .. .                                               | 212  |
| XVII. MARCH FROM SABIE — GLORIOUS ELEPHANT SHOOTING — SABLE ANTELOPE — TWO-GROOVED RIFLE BURSTS — DEATH OF COLESBERG .. .. .                                                  | 225  |
| XVIII. TURN MY WAGGONS TOWARDS THE COLONY — ELEPHANT-SHOOTING — RAINY SEASON COMMENCES — LEAVE THE LAND OF ELEPHANTS .. .. .                                                  | 233  |
| XIX. COLONIAL SERVANTS DESERT — MELANCHOLY ANTICIPATIONS — ARRIVE AT DR. LIVINGSTON'S .. .. .                                                                                 | 243  |
| XX. ARRIVE AT SICHELY'S KRAAL — RAINMAKERS — GUN-MEDICINE — BAKATLA — KURUMAN — CAMPBELLSDORP — COLESBERG AND GRAHAMSTOWN .. .. .                                             | 254  |
| XXI. SET OUT AGAIN FOR THE FAR INTERIOR — FORT BEAUFORT — HUNT ELEPHANTS — RHINOCEROS AND LION SHOT — LEAVE BAMANGWATO COUNTRY .. .. .                                        | 261  |
| XXII. A LION SHOT FROM MY WATCHING-HOLE AT MIDNIGHT — MY FIFTIETH ELEPHANT BAGGED — ROCK SNAKE — FIVE RHINOCEROSSES SHOT — MEET A GRIM LION — COLESBERG — GRAHAMSTOWN .. .. . | 273  |
| XXIII. START ON ANOTHER ELEPHANT-SHOOTING EXPEDITION — CROCODILES — HIPPOPOTAMI — SEROLOMOOTLOOQUE ANTELOPE .. .. .                                                           | 290  |
| XXIV. CROSS THE LIMPOPO — RASH ENCOUNTER WITH A HIPPOPOTAMUS — TWO SEROLOMOOTLOOQUES SHOT — SELEKA'S TOWN — TRADING — HIPPOPOTAMI — AUDACITY OF THE LION .. .. .              | 297  |

| Chap.                                                                                                                                                          | Page |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| XXV. TREK DOWN THE LIMPOPO—A LION CARRIES OFF ONE OF MY MEN — “TSETSE” FLY — PAAPAA FOUNTAIN — HUNTING LIONS WITH DOGS BY MOONLIGHT — A TROOP OF LIONS .. .. . | 312  |
| XXVI. THE LIMPOPO — THE GUAPA MOUNTAINS — SABLE ANTELOPE — PALLAH AND WILD DOGS — A SECRETARY — CROSS THE VAAL RIVER .. .. .                                   | 330  |
| XXVII. FIFTH AND LAST EXPEDITION COMMENCED — MASSACRE OF MY DOGS — BUFFALO-SHOOTING — CROCODILE SHOT — AFFRAY WITH A LEOPARD .. .. .                           | 345  |
| XXVIII. THE LIMPOPO TO THE NGOTWANI AND BACK — SICHELY’S KRAAL — END OF THE FIFTH EXPEDITION — MEN DROWNED — CONCLUSION .. .. .                                | 358  |

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

|                                           |         |                         |
|-------------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------|
| A MIDNIGHT SCENE—ADVENTURE WITH WILD DOGS | ..      | <i>Frontispiece</i>     |
| THE LINE OF MARCH                         | .. .. . | <i>Page 1</i>           |
| THE BLACK RHINOCEROS GIVING CHASE         | .. .. . | <i>To face page 147</i> |
| CAMELOPARD HUNTING AT MASSOUÉY            | .. .. . | „ 178                   |
| COLESBERG DECLINES BEING MOUNTED          | .. .. . | „ 185                   |
| RIDING OUT THE BEST BULL ELEPHANT         | .. .. . | „ 203                   |
| HEADLONG CHARGE OF A WOUNDED ELEPHANT     | .. .. . | „ 225                   |
| STOPPING A POACHER                        | .. .. . | „ 274                   |
| NOCTURNAL ADVENTURE WITH SIX LIONS        | .. .. . | „ 276                   |
| DRAWING A SNAKE                           | .. .. . | „ 281                   |
| A WALTZ WITH A HIPPOPOTAMUS               | .. .. . | „ 298                   |
| THE FATE OF POOR HENDRICK                 | .. .. . | „ 317                   |
| ELEPHANT SHOOTING BY MOONLIGHT            | .. .. . | „ 323                   |
| EXTRAORDINARY HERD OF BLESBOKS            | .. .. . | „ 345                   |
| SCENE ON THE MARIQUA                      | .. .. . | „ 359                   |
| AN ATTACK UPON FOUR PATRIARCHAL LIONS     | .. .. . | „ 361                   |
| HUNTING THE WHITE RHINOCEROS              | .. .. . | „ 362                   |
| FURIOUS CHARGE OF A BUFFALO               | .. .. . | „ 364                   |



# LION-HUNTING

IN

SOUTH AFRICA.

## CHAPTER I.

TRADING AT THE CAPE—PREPARATIONS  
FOR HUNTING.

My first object, after having resolved to make a hunting expedition into the interior of Southern Africa, was to find some experienced person who



could give me the necessary information as to what purchases I ought to make in the way of waggons and oxen, and as to my outfit in general; and I accordingly applied to an individual of the name of Murphy, a trader in the interior, who, I had reason to believe, was better acquainted than any other person in Grahamstown with the frontiers of the colony, and the adjoining territories of the Griqua and Bechuana tribes, situated beyond the Great Orange River. With this person I had already had the pleasure of becoming known during the short time I was quartered in Grahamstown in the month of July, 1843, having been introduced to him by another trader, a man from my own land of Moray, who was famous among the Dutch Boers about and beyond the frontiers. This man, by name Andrew Thompson, of Forbes, was one of three brothers, all of whom followed the same adventurous line of life, and were as steady, hard-working, and determined young men as might be met with throughout the colony.

As, in the course of the following pages, I shall have occasion to allude to these traders, it will perhaps be as well to give the reader a sketch of the manner in which their occupation is conducted. Each trader is supposed to be the proprietor of one or two ox-waggons. These they "load up," from the large stores of the merchants in Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth, with every species of merchandise which the far-dwelling isolated Dutch Boers are likely to require. So supplied, they set out on their long journey, which usually occupies from six to eight months; at the end of this time they return to the colony, enriched with immense droves of sleek oxen and fat wethers, selected from the numerous herds and flocks of the pastoral dwellers in the interior. The waggons of a trader generally contain groceries, hardware, bales of cloth and canvas, haberdashery, saddlery, crockery—in short, everything, from an awl for the Boer to mend his "feldtschoens" or country shoes, to a roll of cherry-coloured or sky-blue riband to tie up the bonny brown locks of his fair daughters, whose beauty, I fear, in too many cases, like that of Skye terriers, consists in their ugliness.

As the trader advances up the country and effects exchanges, he leaves the cattle or sheep for which he has bar-

tered his goods, in charge of the Boer their former master, picking them up on his return southward. When all his merchandise is disposed of, he generally winds up his dealings by exchanging the waggon or waggons which bore them for cash or oxen, or both, and then, purchasing a horse, returns in light marching order to the colony.

The price which a trader gives for a waggon is usually from 40*l.* to 60*l.*, and in war-times often a thousand rix-dollars, or 75*l.*, and he generally obtains for it at the close of his journey from forty to fifty oxen, which he is supposed to select himself. The value of the waggon is partly dependent on the character of the tent or tilt. Tents are of two kinds; the one being coarsely but strongly constructed of green boughs fitting into iron staples along the sides of the waggon, and lashed together with strips of green hide so as to form a succession of arches overhead. These are kept in their position by means of long straight wands laid all along the outside of the arches, the whole framework being very strongly secured by the strips of green hide. On the top of this are placed coarse Kaffir mats made of reeds; these act, to use a seafaring phrase, as a Scotchman, to keep the waggon-sail, which is of stout canvas, from chafing. The other variety of tent is of a less homely build, and termed by the colonists a cap-tent. It requires the hand of a skilful waggon-builder, and is much more elaborately finished, the wood which supports and composes it being all neatly sawn and planed, and fastened together with iron rivets.

This description of waggon is preferred by the aristocracy among the Boers, as presenting the more *distingué* appearance of the two, when they drive their fraus and children on a round of visits, which they are constantly doing; or when flocking to the "Nachmal," or communion, which happens three or four times in the year. The former, or common wand-tent, however, possesses a great advantage over the cap-tent, inasmuch as, in the first place, it is cheaper by 10*l.*, and secondly, if broken in a capsizes, which in Cape travelling is an affair of common occurrence, it is easily repaired on the spot; whereas the cap-tent waggon, if once upset, is irretrievably ruined.

When a trader arrives on a Boer's farm, he halts and walks

up to the door to inquire where he is to "outspan," or unyoke the oxen, and also in what direction they are to be driven to graze. At the door he is met by the baas, or master, generally pipe in mouth, who, cordially greeting him with one hand, raises his hat from his head with the other. The Boers lay great stress on this piece of etiquette, which has to be performed with a whole string of juvenile Boers following in the rear, each encased in a very roomy pair of inexpressibles, and crowned with an immense broad-brimmed tile, nearly half the breadth of its wearer. Permission to outspan being obtained, and a few complimentary speeches interchanged, the trader inquires of the Boer if he has any fat oxen to handle or barter, to which the Boer either at once replies in the negative, or more commonly says, "I do not know. What have you got on your waggon?" The trader answers, "I have got a little of everything, and all of the very best quality, and you shall have anything you require as low as a trader can possibly sell it. I shall presently unload a little for your inspection." The Boer politely says, "No, no, mynheer, you must not off-load; it would grieve me that mynheer should exert himself so much:" to which the trader replies, "It is no trouble; we are accustomed to do it, and it is our business." The trader then instructs his knecht, or head-servant, to make a parade of the goods, and accompanies the Boer into the house, where dinner shortly makes its appearance, to which the Boer invariably, in the most hospitable manner, makes every white stranger welcome. Here, if the trader is wide awake to his own interest, he will pay marked attention to the Noë or frau, as no bargain or transaction of any nature can be ratified with a Dutchman without *her* full concurrence and approval. The Dutch are particularly cleanly in their establishments and cooking, and moreover possess a very fair notion of the culinary art, their tables in general being graced with several very excellent and substantial dishes. When dinner is over, all hands resort to the waggon and overhaul the merchandise, where it is ten to one but the Noë will find about fifty different articles that she will prevail upon her husband to believe indispensable in the private economy of his establishment. Thus when "handling" once begins, it

often goes on briskly, and, from a Boer who at the outset declared himself independent of the trader's supplies, as many as two or three, or even half-a-dozen, fat oxen are often obtained.

As the trader knows well from past experience that the Boer will be sure to endeavour to abate his prices, he makes a point of asking a little more than he intends to take, that he may be able to give in to mynheer's importunities, who, with a sly wink at his wife, congratulates himself on his shrewdness, and flatters himself that he has run a hard bargain.

When the trader has collected all his cattle, he drives them by steady marches, of from twenty to thirty miles in the twenty-four hours, which are performed chiefly during the night, to Grahamstown or Beaufort, where he disposes of them to the butchers. At the former place they are purchased for the use of the town, and by the Government contractors for the supply of the troops. At Beaufort, which is on the high road to Cape Town, they are purchased for the supply of the Cape Town market. The payments for the cattle are seldom, if ever, made in hard cash, the poor trader having to content himself with approved bills, drawn at six or nine months, which in too many cases are never honoured, the defaulter being found either bankrupt, or to have bolted for England or California. The life of a trader is hard and harassing, and he is often liable to very heavy losses by deaths from severe drought, distempers, and other causes; also from the chances of war, oxen straying and being found no more, overstocked markets, and non-payments as above, besides the danger to which he is sometimes exposed from the attacks of wild beasts. During the time he is engaged in driving his oxen, he is compelled to watch his cattle all hours of the night, in all weathers, always obliged to have his clothes on, and to sleep when he can, after the manner of a sea-captain in bad weather, who hangs his nose on to a ratlin, and so takes a nap. As an instance of the injury from chances of war I may here allude to the severe losses sustained by my friend Mr. Peter Thompson. During the war that ravaged the colony in the years 1846 and 1847, he was returning to Grahamstown with a large herd of some hundred fine oxen, the well-earned

proceeds of a toilsome expedition, when he was attacked, within one march of Grahamstown, in De Bruin's Poort, a rugged and densely-wooded ravine, by a band of the marauding Amaponda Kaffirs, armed with guns and assagais, who swept off the whole of his drove, he himself barely escaping with his life.

In years when the prices of cattle are low, these traders occasionally vary their line of march, and, forsaking the Boers for a season, load up a suitable cargo, and direct their course for the Bechuana tribes, from whom they obtain ivory, karosses (skin cloaks), and ostrich-feathers, along with various curiosities, for which they obtain a ready sale in the Grahamstown market, where good ivory averages from 4s. to 4s. 6d. per pound. Karosses vary in price from 1l. to 3l. each, according to their size, kind, and quality. Ostrich-feathers used to fetch from 5l. to 6l. per pound, but, partly owing to the feathers being less worn by the votaries of fashion in London, and partly to the late disturbances throughout Europe, the prices have greatly fallen.\* The articles required for trading with the Bechuana tribes are beads of all sizes and colours, brass and copper wire, knives and hatchets, clothing for both sexes, ammunition, guns, young cows, and she-goats. The two latter the trader obtains in barter from the Boers, Griqua and Koranna tribes, more immediately adjacent to the colony. Some writers have erroneously stated that snuff and tobacco are a good circulating medium among the tribes in Southern Africa, but in the course of my experience I can scarcely remember ever having obtained the smallest trifle in barter for either, not even a drink of milk. The natives have certainly no objection to receive these articles when given gratuitously, but are far too wide awake to place any great value upon them. During my career in Southern Africa I have had much experience in trading with the Bechuana tribes, and, as I shall have occasion to refer to my trading exploits in the course of my narrative, I have entered into the above particulars, that the reader may, at the outset, form an idea of the manner in which these things are conducted.

\* From seventy-five to ninety good-sized ostrich-feathers weigh a pound.

To return to my own journey. I had scarcely expected to find Andrew Thompson and Murphy still in Grahamstown, where I left them about three months before, when I marched thence into Caffraria with my regiment; the latter, whom I found to be a confirmed tippler, was able, in his few lucid moments, to give me much valuable information relative to the preparations which I required to make in the way of purchasing oxen and waggons, engaging servants, &c. &c.; also various wrinkles as to the conducting of my establishment, the hours of marching, and the line of country which I had chalked out for my first expedition. Poor Murphy! he was as kind-hearted a creature as ever breathed.

From the 1st till the 22nd of October I was actively employed in making the necessary purchases and arrangements for my journey, and in forwarding my affairs, in which Murphy, during his sober intervals, most willingly assisted me. As the reader will observe, my establishment at my first outset was on a much more limited scale than upon subsequent expeditions. This was partly owing to the uncertainty which I felt as to the success of my sporting undertakings, and the length of time I might feel inclined to devote to this line of life. I was much in the dark as to what sport I might expect to realise, and what difficulties I should have to encounter, in the trip I was about to make; the truth being that I could not find a single individual, either among the natives or the military, who could in the smallest degree enlighten me on the subject.

The general impression amongst my military friends was, that any game which remained in the interior must have, ere then, retreated to such remote parts, far away in the territories of savage tribes, as to be utterly beyond the reach of any sportsman, however enterprising; and when they saw me bustling about, making my purchases, they used to say to me, "It is all nonsense your laying out your money in this way. We shall see you returning in a month or two, like those fellows who went on a shooting trip last year."

The shooting party here alluded to consisted of one officer of the 7th Dragoons, two of the 27th, and others who, having *obtained a few weeks' leave*, and burning to distinguish them-

selves in a campaign against the feræ of Southern Africa, had hired a waggon, and penetrated as far as the Thebus mountain, where for a few days they enjoyed some good sport among the black wildebeest and springboks which abound on the plains surrounding it; till, having broken the stocks of their rifles in falls from their horses while impetuously "jaging" the game, they returned to head-quarters, one suffering from *coup-de-soleil*, and the rest from dysentery brought on by drinking bad water, they having been unfortunate in the vley beside which they had fixed their encampment. My gallant friend, Lieutenant H——, of the 91st, was one of the most urgent in endeavouring to dissuade me from my steadfast purpose of trekking up the country, and recommended me rather to return with him to England, whither he was about to proceed. H——, who, like many others of the military, entertained a profound disgust for the colony and everything connected with it, at first could hardly believe I was in earnest when I spoke of going up the country; and when convinced that such was my determination, he said, with a strong lisp which was habitual to him, "Good G—, Cummin! you are thurely mad to remain longer in thith country after you have obtained leave to return to dear old England. I athure you, I had rather be a thoe-black in England than live in thith beathly country."

Notwithstanding these friendly dissuasions on the part of my acquaintance, I continued to prosecute my affairs so unremittingly, that on the 22nd I considered my manifold arrangements complete, and, being much harassed and annoyed by the unavoidable delays to which I had been subjected, I was full of impatience to make a start. These delays were in a great measure occasioned by the weather, heavy and constant rains having fallen during the previous fourteen days, accompanied with a cold wind from the Southern Ocean. This, of necessity, materially interfered with and delayed my arrangements, and had also the effect of rendering the country perfectly unfit for locomotion, in many places cutting up the roads with rugged impassable watercourses, and in low-lying districts converting them into deep, impracticable quagmires.

It will here be necessary to give a detailed account of my outfit, to put the reader at once in possession of the extent and nature of my establishment and camp equipage. My first object was, of course, to secure a travelling-waggon, and I procured an excellent new cap-tent one, complete with all its gear ready for inspanning, from Mr. Ogilvie, of Grahamstown, for 60*l.*; which, as it eventually proved a right good one, was decidedly a bargain. I very soon found out, however, that, as I collected numerous specimens of natural history, one waggon was insufficient; and not long after, in the town of Colesberg, on the frontiers of the colony, I purchased a second, also a cap-tent waggon, with its necessary accompaniment, a span of oxen; and at a later period I found it necessary to purchase a third, and became the proprietor of considerably more than a hundred draught oxen.

From an English farmer in the vicinity of Grahamstown I obtained a span of twelve excellent, well-trained, black, zŭr-veldt oxen, which I judged suitable for my purpose, they having been in the habit of bringing in very heavy loads of wood to the Grahamstown market. Their price was 3*l.* each; and as it is not unusual to see an ox, in the best of spans, knock up on long marches, by Murphy's advice I purchased two spare oxen of Mr. Thompson.

My stud of horses as yet consisted of but two, which had been my chargers in the regiment. These were "Sinon," a stallion I had bought of Major Goodman of the 27th, and "The Cow," an excellent dark-brown gelding, which I obtained from Colonel Somerset, of "Ours." I did not think it wise to lay out more money in horse-flesh in Grahamstown, as I should shortly have to pass through the Hantam, where most of the Boers breed horses extensively, and which are famed for their spirit and hardiness throughout the colony. I engaged four servants,—an Englishman of the name of Long, as head-servant, a thorough cockney, who, as I afterwards learnt, had formerly been a cab-driver in London, and whom I took into my service at Murphy's recommendation, Long being supposed to possess a certain degree of experience, having penetrated as far as the banks of the Orange River on a *trading excursion* on his own account; but his heart, as the



event proved, inclined more to worship at the shrine of Venus than at that of Diana. A certain little dark-eyed damsel, who acted as laundress to the military, and who was employed all day in driving her mangle, seemed entirely to engross his thoughts—Long frequently observing that “there was that sweet little creature obliged to drive a mangle who ought rather to be sitting practising at her ‘pihanny.’”

My other three servants were natives. A waggon-driver, named Kleinboy, a stout active Hottentot, with the high cheek-bones and woolly head of his race, and who was quite *au fait* at his department. Like many others of his countrymen, he was subject to fits of sulks, and much preferred reclining for hours under my waggons, or in the shade of a bush practising on his violin, to looking after his master's work. My leader's name was Carollus, a stout, powerful fellow, descended from the Mozambique races; he was the third whom I had engaged in that capacity, the other two having absconded. He entered my service under cover of night, having absconded from Kingsley of “Ours”—that gentleman, according to his assertion, being in the habit of administering a little wholesome correction with the jambok, which, on further acquaintance with him, I had reason to believe he richly merited. My third native servant was Cobus, a Hottentot of light weight, the son of a veteran in my regiment. He 'listed in the capacity of after-rider, and proved to be first-rate in his calling, being the best horseman I met with in South Africa; he also, like Kleinboy, was liable to fits of sulkiness.

The baggage, provisions, and general stores which I carried with me were as follows:—Two sacks, containing 300 lbs. of coffee, 4 quarter-chests of tea, 300 lbs. of sugar, 300 lbs. of rice, 180 lbs. of meal, 100 lbs. of flour, 5 lbs. of pepper, 100 lbs. of salt, an anker of vinegar, several large jars of pickles, half a dozen hams and cheeses, 2 cases of gin, 1 anker of brandy, 1 half-aum of Cape brandy, iron baking-pots with long legs, stewing and frying-pans, saucepans and gridirons, tin water-buckets of various sizes, 2 large “fagie,” or water-casks, an accompaniment which no Cape waggon is ever *without*, 2 large flasks of tar to be subsequently mixed with

hard fat for greasing the wheels, 6 dozen pocket-knives, 24 boxes of snuff, 50 pounds of tobacco, 300 lbs. of coral, white, red, and bright blue beads of various sizes; 3 dozen tinder-boxes; 1 cwt. of brass and copper wire, which the Bechuana tribes, especially those dwelling to the east, readily barter and convert into ornaments for their legs and arms; 2 dozen sickles, 2 spades, 2 shovels, 1 pickaxe, 5 superior American axes, 2 augers, 1 stock and 36 bits, hatchets, planes, drawing-knives, several coarse chisels for waggon-work, a vice, blacksmith and carpenter's hammers, and a variety of other tools appertaining to both these trades. A gross of awls, a gross of sail-needles, 50 hanks of sail-twine, 2 bolts of sail-canvas, several rolls of stout woollen cloths, 2 dozen gown-pieces, 6 dozen Malay handkerchiefs; thread, needles, and buttons; ready-made jackets and trowsers for my people, several dozen coarse shirts, Scotch bonnets, and cocker-nonnys; as for shoes, colonial servants are supposed to make them for themselves; a few medicines, arsenical soap, English and coarse Boer's soap. Also, 1 large bell-tent, 1 mattress and bedding, 1 camp-table and chair, and my canteen, which I found a most serviceable and convenient appendage during my wanderings. My saddlery consisted of 2 English hunting-saddles, 2 common ones for servants, and 1 pack-saddle to convey venison to camp. My ordnance was as follows:—3 double-barrelled rifles by Purdey, William Moore, and Dickson of Edinburgh—the latter two-grooved, the most perfect and useful rifle I ever had the pleasure of using; 1 heavy single-barrelled German rifle, carrying 12 to the lb. This last was an old companion, which had been presented to me, when a boy, by my dear and much-lamented friend and brother-sportsman, the late James Duff of Innes House. With this rifle, about ten years before, I had brought down my first stag on the Paps of Jura, and subsequently bowled over many a princely master-stag and graceful roebuck in his summer-coat, in the glens and forests of my native land. The Purdey also was a tried friend, both it and the heavy German having been with me in several campaigns on the plains and in the jungles of Hindostan. Besides these I had 3 stout double-barrelled guns for rough work, when hard riding and quick

loading are required. Several lead-ladles of various sizes, a whole host of bullet-moulds, loading-rods, shot-belts, powder-flasks, and shooting-belts; 3 cwt. of lead; 50 lbs. of pewter for hardening the balls to be used in destroying the larger game; 10,000 prepared leaden bullets, bags of shot of all sizes, 100 lbs. of fine sporting gunpowder, 300 lbs. of coarse gunpowder, about 50,000 best percussion-caps, 2000 gun-flints, greased patches and cloth to be converted into the same. I carried also several spare yokes, yoke-skeys, whip-sticks, rheims, straps, and 2 sets of spare linchpins, all of which last articles belong to the waggon. With the above, and 200*l.* in cash, I considered myself prepared to undertake a journey of at least twelve months amongst Boers or Bechuanas, independent of either.

While I was laying in these stores, I once or twice amused myself by riding in quest of rheebok in the rugged and precipitous high grounds lying immediately to the south of Grahamstown. On one of these occasions I was accompanied by my cousin, Colonel Campbell of the 91st (one of the bravest and most distinguished officers in the late Kaffir war, and withal about the best rifle-shot and keenest sportsman then in the colony), a brother of Captain Campbell of Skipness, the author of the 'Old Forest-Ranger,' a work highly approved amongst Indian Nimrods. The rheebok is a species of antelope generally found in all mountain districts throughout Southern Africa, from Table Mountain to the latitude of Kuruman or New Litakoo. Of this animal there are two varieties; the rhooye-rheebok, or red rheebuck; and the vaal-rheebok, or grey rheebuck. The range of the vaal-rheebok, to the northward, ceases in the latitude of the Long Mountains lying to the south of Kuruman; the other variety is met with as far north as the mountains in the territory of Sichely, chief of the Baquaines, about fifty miles to the north of the Kurrichane range: both of these antelopes frequent high and rocky mountains. They are both hunted in the same manner; and, when properly pursued, I think it more nearly resembles Scotch Highland deerstalking than the pursuit of any other antelope.

*Throughout the grassy mountains which the hunter must*

traverse in following this antelope, his eye is often gladdened by romantic dells and sparkling rivulets, the exhilarating freshness of which strongly and pleasingly contrasts with the barren, rocky mountain heights and shoulders immediately contiguous. The green banks and little hollows along the margins of these streamlets are adorned with innumerable species of brilliant plants and flowering shrubs in wild profusion. Amongst them, to my eye, the most dazzling in their beauty were perhaps those lovely heaths for which the Cape is so justly renowned. These exquisite plants, singly, or in groups, here adorn the wilderness, with a freedom and luxuriance which, could the English gardener or amateur florist behold, he might well feel disheartened, so infinitely does Nature in this favoured clime surpass in wild exuberance the nurselings of his artificial care. I remember being particularly struck with two pre-eminently brilliant varieties, the one bearing a rose-coloured, the other a blood-red bell; and though I regret to say I am but a poor botanist, even in the heat of the chase I paused, spell-bound, to contemplate with admiration their fascinating beauty. Others, with their downy stems and waxen flowers of every gaudy hue, green, lilac, and various shades of pink, red, and crimson, some of them with brown lips to the bell, flourished in the richer hollows of their native glen, or bloomed with equal loveliness along the arid cliffs and fissures of the overhanging rocks. Almost equalling the heaths in beauty, and surpassing them in the additional attraction of their scented leaves, a whole host of geraniums fill the balmy breeze with their delicious perfume. These are too well known to admit of any novelty in description, but I may mention, *en passant*, that they attain a far larger growth in their native soil than in our greenhouses. Small groups of the lofty, fair, conscious-looking iris, rear their graceful heads along the edges of the streams. Their fairy forms reflected in the waters, "they seem to stand like guardian Naiads of the strand." Another tribe of plants, which particularly delighted me from old associations, though not so striking as many of its neighbours for perfume and brilliancy, was composed of several varieties of the light, airy fern, or bracken, which, whether gracefully overshadowing the mossy

stones, eternally moistened by the bubbling spray of the stream, which they kissed as it danced along, or veiling the grey lichen-clad masses of rock in the hollows higher up, strongly reminded me of those so conspicuously adorning the wild glens in the mountains of my native land. Besides these, a thousand other gay flowers deck the hills and plains wherever the eye can fall. Endless varieties of the *ixea*, the *hæmanthus*, the *amaryllis*, the marigold, and a number of everlasting flowers, are scattered around with a lavish hand; also the splendid protea, whose sweets never fail to attract swarms of the insect tribes, on which several bright kinds of fly-catchers, their plumage glancing in the noonday sun, are constantly preying. Farther down these watercourses, in the dense, shady ravines, the jungle is ornamented with long tangled festoons of different creepers, among which the wild jessamine ranks foremost, hanging in fragrant garlands amid the shaggy lichens, and bunches of bright orange-coloured mistletoe, for which the forests of Africa, in the vicinity of her sea-coasts, are so remarkable. While touching on the floral beauties of the hills more immediately adjoining the sea-coast, I may remark that here are the great nurseries for heaths and geraniums. As the traveller advances up the country these gradually disappear, and, together with the animal kingdom, the vegetable world assumes entirely new features; the colonial forest-trees and bushes, herbs and plants, being succeeded by a vast and endless world of loveliness; unseen, unknown, untrodden, save by those varied multitudes of stupendous, curious, and beautiful quadrupeds, whose forefathers have roamed its mighty solitudes from primæval ages, and with whom I afterwards became so intimately acquainted.

## CHAPTER II.

## COMMENCEMENT OF MY JOURNEYINGS.

ON the 23rd of October, 1843, having completed my arrangements, and collected and settled all outlying debts, the weather, which had been wet and stormy for many days past, assuming a more settled appearance, I resolved to "inspan" and "trek," which the reader will bear in mind mean to yoke and march. I accordingly communicated my intentions to my followers, and despatched my leader Carollus to the neighbouring mountains, where my cattle were supposed to be pasturing, to bring them up. He expended the greater part of the day in searching for them in vain about their wonted feeding-ground: at length, late in the afternoon, he chanced to meet a comrade, who informed him that the oxen he was seeking were safely lodged in the "skit-kraal," or pound, Colonel Somerset, of "Ours," having detected them in the act of luxuriating in a field of green forage. This pleasing intelligence demanded my immediate attendance at the skit-kraal, where, by a disbursement of nine shillings, I obtained their release.

Having secured my oxen, my next business was to find my servants, who were all missing. Long, as I expected, was found gallantly assisting the dark-eyed heroine of the mangle, and Kleinboy and Cobus were discovered in a state of brutal intoxication, stretched on the greensward in front of one of the canteens, along with sundry other waggon-drivers and Hottentot Venuses, all in the same condition, having expended on liquor the pay which they had extracted from me in advance on the plea of providing themselves with necessaries. Drunk as the rest were, Carollus, who was sober, managed to allure them to the waggons, and, Long assisting, the inspanning commenced. As no man who has not visited the

Cape can form any idea of the manner in which this daily operation is performed, it will here be necessary to explain it, and to say a few more words concerning the structure of a waggon.

The Cape waggon is a large and powerful, yet loosely-constructed vehicle, running on four wheels. Its extreme length is about 18 feet, its breadth varying from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 feet; the depth of the sides is about 2 feet 6 inches in front, but higher towards the back of the waggon. All along the sides two rows of iron staples are riveted, in which are fastened the boughs forming the tent, over the waggon usually 5 feet high, with an awning of Kaffir mat, and a strong canvas sail over all, with "fore-clap" and "after-clap," the colonial names for two broad canvas curtains, that form part and parcel of the sail, and hang in the front and rear of the waggon, reaching to within a few inches of the ground. In the front is placed a large chest occupying the extreme breadth of the waggon, on which the driver and two passengers of ordinary dimensions can sit abreast. This is called the fore-chest, and is secured from sliding forwards by two buffalo rheims, or strips of dressed hide, placed across the front of it, and secured to the sides. A similar chest is fastened in like manner to the rear of the waggon, called the after-chest. Along the sides of the waggon, and outside it, are two longer and narrower chests called side-chests; these are supported by two horizontal bars of hard wood riveted to the bottom of the waggon, and are very convenient for holding tools and all manner of odds and ends too numerous to mention. The fore and after chests are likewise extremely useful for containing clothing, ammunition, and a thousand small articles in daily use. Along the sides of the tent are suspended rows of square canvas bags, called side-pockets, in which the traveller keeps his hair-brushes and combs, razors, knives, tooth-brushes, soap, towels, or anything else he may wish to have at hand. In one of these bags I usually placed my luncheon—often a slice of elephant's trunk.

The traveller sleeps upon a sort of cot, termed a "cardell." This cardell is a light, strong, oblong frame, about eight feet in length, and occupies the breadth of the waggon. It is

bored all round with small holes, through which strips of hide are interlaced, forming a sort of network on which the mattress rests. This cot is slung across the waggon, and is attached with thongs to the bows of the tent, its elevation being regulated by the cargo, which is carefully stowed away beneath it in the body of the waggon. Suspended underneath the hind part of the vehicle is a strong wooden framework called the trap, on which the pots and gridirons are lashed during a march. The waggon is steered by a pole, called the dissel-boom, to the end of which is fastened the trektow, a stout rope formed of raw buffalo-hide. It is pulled by a span, or team, consisting of twelve oxen, which draw the waggon by yokes fastened along the trektow at regular intervals by means of strips of raw hide. Passing through each end of the yoke, at distances of 18 inches from one another, are two parallel bars of tough wood about a foot and a half in length; these are called yoke-skeys. In inspanning, the yoke is placed on the back of the neck of the ox, with one of these skeys on either side, and towards the ends are notches in which is fixed the strap, made of twisted hide; this, passing under the neck of the animal, secures him in the yoke.

Besides these straps, each pair of oxen is strongly coupled by the buffalo rheims, which are used in catching and placing them in their proper order, preparatory to inspanning. A rheim is a long strip of prepared hide with a noose at the end; it is made either of ox or buffalo hide, and is about eight feet long. A waggon likewise is provided with a tar-bucket, two powerful iron chains which are called the rheim-chains, and a large iron drag called the rheim-schoen; also the invariable whip and jambok, the former consisting of a bamboo pole upwards of 20 feet in length, with a thong of about 25 feet, to the end of which is sewn with "rheimpys," or strips of dressed steinbok-skin, the "after-slock," and to this again is fastened the "fore-slock," corresponding with the little whipcord lash of the English coachman. The "fore-slock," about which the waggon-drivers are very particular, is about a yard in length, and is formed of a strip of the supple skin of a particular variety of antelope prepared in a peculiar manner. *The skins of only a few species of antelopes are*



possessed of sufficient toughness for this purpose. Those most highly prized amongst the colonists are the skins of the hartebeest, koodoo, blesbok, and bushbuck; when none of these are to be obtained they use the skin of a he-goat, which is very inferior. The colonial waggon-driver wields this immense whip with great dexterity and grace; as he cracks it he produces a report nearly equal to that of a gun, and by this means signals his leader, who is perhaps herding the oxen at the distance of a mile, to bring them up when it is time to inspan.

The "jambok" is another instrument of persuasion, indispensable in the outfit of every Cape waggon. It is made of the thick, tough hide either of the white rhinoceros or hippopotamus. Its length is from 6 to 7 feet; its thickness at the handle is about an inch and a half, and it tapers gradually to the point. These jamboks are exceedingly tough and pliant, and are capable of inflicting most tremendous chastisement upon the thick hides of sulky and refractory oxen. Those manufactured from the skin of the hippopotamus are very much superior to those of the rhinoceros, being naturally of a much tougher quality, and, if properly prepared, one of them will last for many years. A smaller description of jambok is manufactured for the benefit of horses, and may be seen in the hands of every horseman in the colony.

When the leader brings up the oxen to the waggon to be inspanned, the waggon-driver, if possible, sends another Hottentot to his assistance, especially if any of the oxen in the span happen to be young or refractory. These, armed with a huge jambok in one hand, and a handful of stones in the other, one on either flank, with shouts, yells, and imprecations, urge forward the unwilling team towards the yokes, where the driver is standing with the twelve long buffalo rheims hanging on his left arm, pouring forth a volley of soothing terms, such as—"Ah! now, Scotland! Wo, ha, Blauberger! you skellum, keer dor Carollus for Blauberger, ye stand somar da, ich wichna wha yo hadachta ist." (Turn there for Blauberger; you stand there in an absent state, I do not know where your ideas are.) "Holland, you ould My-footy!" ("Myfooty" is a common Hottentot term, which I

would defy even themselves to construe. The Dutch word "somar," mentioned above, is also a word to which I think I could challenge the most learned schoolmaster in the colony to attach any definite meaning. It is used both by Boers and Hottentots in almost every sentence; it is an answer to every question; and its meanings are endless.) "Slangfeldt, you neuxel!" (Snakefield, you humbug!) "Wo ha, now, Creishmann!" (Crooked man.) "Orlam, you verdomde Kind, vacht un bidgte, ich soll you krae." (Civilized! you d—d child; wait a bit, I'll serve you out.) "Vitfoot, you duivel! slahm dar für Vitfoot, slahm ihm dat he barst!" (Whitefoot, you devil! flog there Whitefoot, flog him till he bursts.) "Englandt, you ould ghroote-pench! Ah now! Wo ha! Ye dat so lowe ist in die shwor plach, und dharum so vees at inspanning! Vacht un bidgte, ich soll a plach for you aitsuch. Ye lob da for nett so as ye will, mar ich soll you arter bring, whar ich kann you mach like baikam." (England, you old big-paunch! Ah now! Who ha! You who are so lazy in the heavy place, and nevertheless so vicious at inspanning. Wait a little. I shall seek out a place for you! You tramp there in front, exactly as you please; but I will yoke you farther back, where I can reach you with facility.) This is said in allusion to "England's" having lately been in the habit of being yoked in the front of the team, and if it is very long the driver cannot reach the leading oxen with his whip without descending from the box, and, therefore, when a fore-ox becomes lazy, he is yoked farther back, that he may have the full benefit of the persuasive "fore-slock."

While the driver's tongue is pouring forth this flow of Hottentot eloquence with amazing volubility, his hands and feet are employed with equal activity; the former, in throwing the open noose of the rheim, lasso-like, over the horns of each ox, and drawing it tight round them as he catches him; the latter in kicking the eyes and noses of those oxen which the jamboks and shouts of the leaders behind have driven too far in upon him. At this moment "Blauberg," who is an old offender, and who acquired in early youth the practice which he has never relinquished of bolting from the team at the moment of *inspanning*, being this day unusually lively, not

having had any severe work for some weeks, suddenly springs round, notwithstanding Kleinboy, well aware of his propensities, has got his particular rheim firmly twisted round his hand; and having once got his tail where his head ought to have been, and thus deprived Kleinboy of all purchase over him, he bounds madly forward, heedless of a large sharp stone with which one of the leaders salutes him in the eye. By his forward career Carollus is instantly dashed to the ground; and Kleinboy, who has pertinaciously grasped the rheim in the vain hope of retrieving the matter, is dragged several yards along the ground, and eventually relinquishes the rheim, at the same time losing a good deal of the outer bark of his unfortunate hand. Away goes Blauberg in his headlong course, tearing frantically over hill and dale, his rheim flying from his horns like a streamer in the wind. His course lies right across the middle of the Cape-Corps barracks, where about forty or fifty riflemen who are lounging about, parade being over, rush to intercept his course, preceded by a pack of mongrel curs of every shape and size, but in vain; Blauberg, heedless of a shower of sticks and stones hurled at his devoted head, charges through the midst of them, nor is he recovered for the space of about two hours.

The rest of the team, seeing their driver sprawling on the ground, as a matter of course follow Blauberg's example; instantly wheeling to the right and left about, away they scamper, each selecting a course for himself, some with, and others without, the appendage of the streamers. The Hottentots, well aware that it will be useless to follow Blauberg in the usual way, as he would probably lead them a chase of four or five miles, now adopt the most approved method usually practised in such cases. They accordingly drive out a small troop of tamer oxen, with which they proceed in quest of the truant; this troop they cunningly induce Mr. Blauberg to join, and eventually return with him to the waggon—the driver, with pouting lips and the sweat running down his brow, pouring forth a torrent of threatened vengeance against the offending Blauberg. The inspanning is then once more commenced as before, and Blauberg, being this time *cautiously placed in a central position*, well wedged up by the

other oxen, whereby he is prevented from turning about, is lassoed with the strongest rheim, and firmly secured to the steady old ox who has purposely been driven up beside him. The twelve oxen are soon all securely yoked in their proper places; the leader has made up his "fore-tow," which is a long spare rheim attached round the horns of each of the fore or front oxen, by which he leads the team, and inspanning is reported to be accomplished.

I omitted to mention that the two fore-oxen, and the two after-oxen, which are yoked one on either side of the "dissel-boom," or pole, are always supposed to be the steadiest, most intelligent, and tractable in the team. The two fore-oxen in particular, to be right good ones, require a combination of excellences, as it is indispensable to the safety of the waggon that they should thoroughly understand their duty. They are expected, unguided by reins, to hold the rarely-trodden roads of the remoter parts of the colony either by day or night; and so well trained are these sagacious animals, that it is not uncommon to meet with a pair of fore-oxen which will, of their own accord, hold the "spoor" or track of a single waggon that has crossed a plain perhaps six months previously.

In dangerous ground, however—where the narrow road winds through stones and rocks, or along the brink of a precipice; or where the road is much intersected by water-courses, and bordered by the eternal hillocks raised by the white ants (of the consistence of a brick, being formed, during damp weather, of clay, which the sun afterwards hardens); or where the "aard-varcke," or ant-bear, with his powerful claws has undermined the road with enormous holes—the fore-oxen, however trustworthy, should never be left to their own devices, but the leader should precede them, leading by the tow. But this safe and highly necessary precaution is rarely practised by the ruffianly Hottentots when the "baas" or master is not present, these worthies preferring to sit still and smoke their pipes or play their violins during the march, to performing their duty—thus frequently exposing their employer's property to imminent peril. It is thus that more than half the capsizes, broken axletrees, broken dissel-booms,

and smashed cap-tents, daily occur throughout the colony. All being now in readiness, and some pots and spades, which the Hottentots as a matter of course had omitted to stow away in their proper places, being securely lashed on the trap and to the sides of the waggon, the illustrious Kleinboy brandishes his huge whip, and cracking it with a report which loudly reverberates throughout the walls and houses of the Cape-Corps barracks, shouts out, with stentorian lungs, "Trek, trek, you duivels! Rhure y'lla dar vor, you skellums! Ane spoor trap, you neuxels! Tabelberg, you ould kring! Trek, you löwe paar marys. Schneeberg, you löwe Satan! Blauberg, you duivel's kind!"—(Draw, draw, you devils! Move yourselves forward, there, you skellums! Tramp all in the same track, you humbugs! Table Mountain, you old ring! Draw, you lazy troop of mares! Snow Mountain, you lazy Satan! Blue Mountain, you child of the devil!)—At the same moment he catches the refractory Blauberg the most terrific wipe round the ribs with his fore-slock, accompanied by a sharp report like the discharge of a pistol, upon which a cloud of blue hair is seen to fly from the ox, and a long red streak, down which the blood flows, denotes the power of the weapon the driver so mercilessly wields over the backs of his horned team. At last the huge and heavily-laden waggon is in motion, and rolls lightly along after the powerful oxen, which on level ground seem scarcely to feel the yokes that lie across their necks.

Having to pick up several large parcels at the stores of some of the merchants in the town, we trekked down the main street of Grahamstown; and in passing the shops of the butchers and bakers laid in a large supply of bread and fresh meat for immediate use. Before we had proceeded far, some sharp-sighted Hottentots came running after us, calling out that a fountain of tiger's milk had started in the stern of the waggon; and on halting we discovered that several loose cases of gin, which I had purchased for immediate use, and which had not been properly stowed, had sprung a leak. The Hottentots seemed to regret amazingly the loss of so much good liquor, and endeavoured with their hands to catch it as it fell. *Owing to the various delays which had occurred during the*

day, we were scarcely half a mile clear of Grahamstown when the sun went down; and there being no moon, I deemed it expedient to halt for the night. We accordingly outspanned; and the Hottentots, having secured the oxen to the yokes, and picketed my two horses on the wheels, requested my permission to return to the town to take another farewell of their wives and sweethearts. This I did not deem altogether prudent; but, knowing well that if I withheld my consent they would go without it, I considered it best to comply with a good grace, and, granting a general leave of absence, took on myself the charge of the ambulatory castle, which was destined to be my home during the next five years.

The Hottentots, strange to say, according to their promise, returned to the waggon during the night, and next morning, at dawn of day, I roused them, and we inspanned. When this was accomplished, my head servant Long not appearing, we marched; but had only proceeded about three miles when he managed to overtake us, the road being hilly and very soft, owing to the recent rains. On coming up and recovering his breath, he expressed himself very much disgusted at my starting without him, when I took the liberty of explaining that I expected my servants to wait for me, and not that I should tarry for them. Our progress was considerably impeded by the bad state of the roads, and at ten A.M. we halted for breakfast beside a pool of rain-water, having performed a march of about nine miles. Here, having outspanned our oxen, we set about preparing our gipsy breakfast: one collected sticks for the fires, another filled the kettles at the adjoining "vley," while Long and I were busied in spreading the table and dusting the beefsteaks with salt and pepper.

Having permitted the oxen to graze for a few hours, we again inspanned, holding the high road for Somerset; about sundown we halted for the night on the farm of a Mr. Fichett, a great sheep-farmer, who received me hospitably, and invited me to dine with him. Here I met Captain Codrington, who had lately sold out of the 7th Dragoons. Our march this day lay through a succession of low, undulating hills, richly

clothed with a variety of grasses, herbs, and flowers, with here and there large patches of dwarfish evergreens. I had directed my Hottentots to kraal the oxen that night, with the intention of making an early start on the following morning, but the herdsman contrived to lose them in the thick under-wood. They were, however, recovered at an early hour the next day, and, having breakfasted, I was about to proceed, when Long, with a face worthy of his name, came up to me with a whole tissue of dire complaints about his personal inconveniences, the most galling of which appeared to be his having to sleep on the ground in the tent. On my friend's advancing these objections, I saw very plainly he was not the man for my work, so I made over to him his impedimenta, paid him his month's wages, and wished him a safe return to Grahams-town.

It was a lovely day, with a bright blue sky overhead, covered with light, fleecy clouds, and the trees and shrubs, freshened by the recent rains, emitted an aromatic perfume. Having proceeded some miles, we commenced ascending the Zuurberg range, where we were met by two waggons from Somerset, laden with oranges for the Grahamstown market, of which I purchased several dozen, and found them excellent. The drivers of these waggons informed me that the road in advance was almost impassable, owing to the recent heavy rains. Although their oxen were better than mine, and their waggons lighter by some thousand pounds, they had had great difficulty in coming on, and recommended me to retrace my steps, and, crossing the country, try the other road by De Bruin's Poort. Notwithstanding their remonstrances, I resolved to push on.

About midday I outspanned for two hours, to let the cattle graze; after which, having proceeded a few miles, we found the road, as they predicted, so cut up, that we were obliged to abandon it, and trek along the rugged hill-side, holding a course parallel to it. Marching in front, and sinking up to my ankles in mud at every step, I endeavoured to select the hardest ground, on which the waggon might follow, but it became every moment worse and worse, and the panting oxen *straining* every nerve to keep it in motion, halted

every hundred yards to take breath. At length the wheels suddenly sank deep into the soil, and became immoveably fixed, upon which we made loose our shovels and pickaxe, and worked hard for half an hour, clearing away the soil in front of and around the wheels; which, being accomplished, we rigged out a fore-tow and extra yoke to inspan my two spare oxen, and then set our whole fourteen to draw, but they could not move the waggon an inch. We then lightened it of a part of the cargo, and, after half an hour's further labour, had relieved the waggon of upwards of three thousand pounds; but still the oxen, notwithstanding the most unmerciful application of both whip and jambok, failed to move it. The thought then struck me of pulling it out backwards; we accordingly cast loose the trektow, and, having hooked on the long span or team to the after part of the waggon, succeeded in extricating it from its deep bed. We next proceeded with much care and trouble to stow away the baggage we had removed, and the oxen being again placed in their position we resumed our journey; but, before we had gone three hundred yards, the waggon again became engulfed, sinking into the earth to such a depth that I half expected it would disappear altogether—the nave of the wheel was actually six or eight inches below the surface. This put us at our wit's ends, and I began to think that, if this was to be our rate of travelling, my hair would be grey ere I reached the land of elephants.

A few minutes after this had occurred another waggon, meeting us from Somerset, hove in sight, but shortly stuck fast within a quarter of a mile of us. Its owner, an Englishman, an Albany transport-rider or carrier, of the name of Leonard, now came up, and requested me to lend him my oxen to assist him in his difficulties, which I did, he promising in return to help me out of mine; but it was not until unloaded of the entire cargo that they succeeded in extricating his, after which, with considerable trouble, they came to us. We now hooked on to my waggon both spans, amounting to twenty-six strong oxen, the drivers standing one on either side, with their whips ready at the given signal to descend upon the devoted animals. *I myself, with one of the Hottentots, armed with*



the jamboks, stood by the after-oxen, upon whom, in a dilemma of this sort, much depends. Every man and beast being at his post, the usual cry of "Trek, trek!" resounded on all sides, accompanied by a torrent of unearthly yells and abusive epithets; at the same time the whips were plied with energetic dexterity, and came down with startling reports on the backs of the oxen throughout the length of the team. The twenty-six oxen, thus urged, at the same moment concentrated their energies, laying a mighty strain on the gear. Something *must* yield, and accordingly my powerful buffalo trektow snapped asunder within a few feet of the dissel-boom. The trektow being strongly knotted together, a second attempt was made, when it snapped in a fresh place. We then unhooked the long drag-chains from beneath the waggon, where-with having fortified the trektow, we made a third trial. The cunning oxen, having now twice exerted themselves in vain, and being well aware the waggon was fast, according to their usual custom, could not be induced to make any further effort, notwithstanding the waggon-drivers had inflicted upon them about half an hour's terrific flogging. In cases of this sort the oxen, instead of taking properly to their work, spring about in the yoke, and turn their tails round where their heads should be, invariably snapping the straps and yoke-skeas, and frequently splitting the yokes. In the present instance my gear did not escape, for, after battling with the oxen till the sun went down, and smashing the half of my rheims, straps, and skeas, and splitting one of my yokes, we were obliged to give it up for the night. We therefore cast loose the oxen, and, driving them up the hill-side, granted them their liberty until morning; leaving our broken gear, pickaxes, spades, and other utensils scattered about the ground in grand confusion—tired and worn out, we kindled a fire, and set about cooking our dinner. Leonard and his servants declared that they had not tasted anything but a little biscuit and coffee during the last three days, the Dutchmen along their road being very unfriendly and inhospitable to the English transport-riders.

Next morning we awoke refreshed by sound slumbers, and having despatched all the Hottentots, excepting one man, in

quest of the oxen, Leonard and I were actively employed for two hours in digging out and off-loading the waggon, after which he and the Hottentot set about preparing the breakfast, whilst I proceeded to darn my worsted stockings, having had the good fortune to obtain some hanks of worsted from the wife of a Scotch serjeant in Grahamstown, after vainly seeking that article in the shops of all the haberdashers in the place. While we were thus employed, Captain Codrington and Mr. Fichett rode up to us, and seemed very much amused at our situation. Having drunk a cup of coffee with me, Fichett and Codrington returned home, previously engaging me to dine with them, as I had resolved to retrace my steps and try another line of country. About eleven A.M. the Hottentots returned with our oxen, when, with the united efforts of the teams, we succeeded in extricating my now lightened waggon. The two oxen I purchased from Thompson, though well-favoured, proving indolent in a heavy pull, I exchanged them with Leonard, with liberty to pick any two out of his span, giving him a sovereign to boot. His team consisted of twelve tough little red Zoolah oxen, from the district of Natal, which, like the Albany cattle, are termed "Zuur-feldt." This colonial phrase is applied to all oxen bred and reared near the sea-coast, in districts where the majority of the grass is sour. Those from about the frontiers of the colony, or anywhere beyond the Orange River, are termed "Sweet-feldt" oxen. The Zuur-feldt cattle possess a superiority over the Sweet-feldt as trek oxen, inasmuch as they thrive on any pasture; whereas the latter die if detained more than a few days in Zuur-feldt districts. Leonard's waggon had been upset four times on the preceding day, so I determined on taking the route through De Bruin's Poort, which had been recommended to me by the drivers of the Somerset orange-waggons; by this route I should avoid Somerset, and pass through the village of Cradock. My plans at this time were, in the first instance, to proceed direct to the Thebus Flats, where black wildebeest and springbok were reported to abound; and thence march upon Colesberg, a village on the frontiers, where I expected to meet my cousin Colonel Campbell, of the 91st, by whose advice, in a

great measure, I intended to be guided in my future movements.

We now reloaded my waggon, made all fast, and, having put everything in order, Leonard and I journeyed together to Fichett's farm, where I once more took up my quarters for the night. While actively busied with my oxen, I saw to-day for the first time the honey-bird. This extraordinary little bird, which is about the size of a chaffinch, and of a light-grey colour, invariably leads a person following it to a wild-bees' nest. Chattering and twittering in a state of great excitement, it perches on a branch beside the traveller, endeavouring by various wiles to attract his attention; and having succeeded in doing so, it flies lightly forward in a wavy course in the direction of the bees' nest, alighting every now and then, and looking back to ascertain if the traveller is following it, all the time keeping up an incessant twitter. When at length it arrives at the hollow tree, or deserted white-ant's hill, which contains the honey, it for a moment hovers over the nest, pointing to it with its bill, and then takes up a position on a neighbouring branch, anxiously awaiting its share of the spoil. When the honey is taken, which is accomplished by suffocating the bees with the smoke of burning grass at the entrance of their domicile, the honey-bird will often lead to a second and even to a third nest. The person thus following it ought to whistle. The savages in the interior, whilst in pursuit, have several charmed sentences which they use on the occasion. The wild bee of Southern Africa exactly corresponds with the domestic garden-bee of England. They are very generally diffused throughout every part of Africa—bees'-wax forming a considerable part of the cargoes of ships trading to the Gold and Ivory Coasts, and the deadly district of Sierra Leone, on the western shores of Africa.

Interesting as the honey-bird is, and though sweet be the stores to which it leads, I have often had cause to wish it far enough, as, when following the warm "spoor" or track of elephants, I have often seen the natives, at moments of the utmost importance, resign the spoor of the beasts to attend to the summons of the bird. Sometimes, however, they are

"sold," it being a well-known fact, both among the Hottentots and tribes of the interior, that they often lead the unwary pursuer to danger, sometimes guiding him to the midday retreat of a grizzly lion, or bringing him suddenly upon the den of the crouching panther. I remember on one occasion, about three years later, when, weary with warring against the mighty elephants and hippopotami which roam the vast forests and sport in the floods of the fair Limpopo, I sought recreation in the humbler pursuit of quail-shooting, that, while thus employed, my attention was suddenly invited by a garrulous honey-bird, which pertinaciously adhered to me for a considerable time, heedless of the reports of my gun. Having bagged as many quails and partridges as I cared about shooting, I whistled lustily to the honey-bird, and gave him chase; after following him to a distance of upwards of a mile, through the open glades adjoining the Limpopo, he led me to an unusually large crocodile, who was lying with his entire body concealed, nothing but his horrid head being visible above the surface of the water, his eyes anxiously watching the movements of eight or ten large bull-buffaloes, which, in seeking to quench their thirst in the river, were crackling through the dry reeds as they cautiously waded in the deep mud that a recent flood had deposited along the edge. Fortunately for the buffaloes, the depth of the mud prevented their reaching the stream, and thus the scaly monster of the river was disappointed of his prey.

## CHAPTER III.

DE BRUIN'S POORT — GREAT FISH RIVER — CRADOCK.

My trektow having been destroyed during the recent struggles, I was glad to purchase a new one from a man named Mackenzie in Fichett's employ, for which, together with a strong thornwood yoke, he charged me 1*l*. On leaving the farm we took an easterly course, and struck into a track which in a few hours led us into the high road leading from Grahamstown to Cradock. Having followed this for several miles, we commenced descending through De Bruin's Poort, where the road winds in a deep, narrow, and rugged ravine, through dense evergreen underwood, in its descent to the lower ground adjacent to the banks of the Great Fish River. This poort, or mountain pass, the terror of waggon-drivers, being at all times perilous to waggons, was in the present instance unusually dangerous and impassable, the recent heavy rains having entirely washed away the loose soil with which the colonists had been in the habit of embanking the permanent shelves and ridges of rock over which the waggons must necessarily pass, while they had at the same time undermined an immense number of large masses of rocks and stones which had hitherto occupied positions on the banks above, and which now lay scattered along the rocky way, presenting an apparently insurmountable barrier to our further progress.

As we were the first party who had travelled this road since the late inundations, it had not received the slightest repair, and this, to have been properly done, would have required the labour of a week. Having halted the waggon, and descended into the ravine for an inspection, accompanied by Kleinboy, I at once pronounced it, in its present state, to be

impassable. Kleinboy, however, well aware that he would not be called upon to pay for damages, seemed to entertain a different opinion, evidently preferring to run all risks rather than encounter the Herculean labours of rolling all the boulders to one side. Accordingly, having made up our minds to take the pass, we re-ascended to the waggon, and, having rheimed or secured the two hind wheels by means of the drag-chains, Kleinboy took his position on the box, and the waggon commenced its perilous descent, I following, in momentary expectation of beholding its destruction. Jolting furiously along, it crashed and jumped from rock to rock: at one moment the starboard hind wheel resting on a projecting ledge several feet in height, while the front wheel on the same side was buried in a deep hollow; the next moment the larboard wheels were suddenly elevated by a corresponding mass of rock on the opposite side, placing the vehicle in such a position that it seemed as though another inch must inevitably decide its fate. I held my breath doubting the possibility of its regaining the horizontal position. Righting again, however, with fearful violence it was launched, tottering from side to side, down the deep stony descent, and eventually, much to my astonishment, the pass was won, and we entered upon the more practicable road beneath.

I could not help fancying how an English-built waggon would have fared in a similar situation, and how a Brighton coachman would have opened his eyes could he have seen my Cape turn-out in the act of descending this fine specimen of a colonial waggon-road, which I might aptly compare to the rugged mountain-bed of some Highland river. Having continued our journey till within an hour of sundown, we encamped for the night. The country through which we had passed was densely covered with one vast jungle of dwarfish evergreen shrubs and bushes, amongst which the speck-boom was predominant. This species of tree, one of the most abundant throughout the forests and jungles of Albany and Caffraria, is utterly unserviceable to man, as its pithy branches, even when dead, are unavailable for fuel. It is, however, interesting, as constituting a favourite food of the elephants *which, about twenty-five years ago, frequented the whole of*

this country in large herds. The footpaths formed through successive ages, by the feet of these mighty animals, are still discernible on the sides and in the necks of some of the forest-clad hills ; and the skulls and larger bones of many are at this moment bleaching in some of the forest-kloofs or ravines adjacent to the sea in Lower Albany.

From time immemorial these interesting and stupendous quadrupeds had maintained their ground throughout these their paternal domains, although they were constantly hunted, and numbers of them were slain, by the neighbouring active and athletic warriors of the Amaponda tribes, on account of their flesh—the ivory so much prized among civilized nations is by them esteemed of no value, the only purpose to which they adapt it being the manufacture of rings and ornaments for their fingers and arms. These gallant fellows, armed only with their assegais or light javelins, of their own manufacture, were in the constant habit of attacking the gigantic animals, and overpowering them with the accumulated showers of their weapons. At length, however, when the white lords of the creation pitched their camps on the shores of Southern Africa, a more determined and general warfare was waged against the elephants for the sake of their tusks, with the more destructive engines of ball and powder. In a few years those who managed to escape from the hands of their oppressors, after wandering from forest to forest, and from one mountain-range to another, and finding that sanctuary there was none, turned their faces to the north-east, and migrated from their ancestral jungles to lands unknown.\*

When the colonists first settled in Albany, they were in the habit of carrying on a very lucrative traffic with the chiefs of the neighbouring Amaponda tribes, from whom they obtained large quantities of ivory in barter for beads, brass wire, and other articles of little value.

Throughout the jungles of Albany and Caffraria, but more

\* A small remnant, however, remained; and these, along with a few buffaloes, koodoos, and one solitary black rhinoceros, still found shelter in the vast jungles of the Zuurberg and Addo bush as late as the commencement of 1849.

particularly in the deep kloofs and valleys, many varieties of noble forest-trees are found of considerable size and great beauty, several of which are much prized by the colonists on account of their excellence for waggon-work and house-building; of these I may enumerate the yellow-wood tree, the wild cedar, the stink-wood tree, and the black and the white iron-wood tree. The two latter are remarkable for toughness and durability, and are much used for the axletrees of waggons. The primitive wooden axletrees have of late years been superseded in some districts by patent iron ones; many, however, still use and prefer the old wooden axletrees, because waggons having those made of iron, in steep descents, run too freely after the team, to the injury of the two after-oxen; and, further, because a wooden axle, if broken, may be replaced in any remote part of the country, whereas a damaged iron axletree cannot be mended even by the skilful smiths of the colony. The iron axles are especially apt to be broken in cold frosty mornings during the winter, when a waggon, immediately after being set in motion, has to pass through rough ground before the friction of the wheel has imparted to it a certain degree of heat.

On the following day a march of four hours brought us to the bank of the Great Fish River, having crossed an extensively open glade covered with several varieties of low shrubs and grasses and rough heather. Here for the first time I saw and shot the black koran, an excellent game-bird, allied to the bustards, so abundant throughout South Africa. Its weight corresponds with that of our old cock grouse; the legs and neck are long, like those of the ostrich; its breast and back are grey, and the wings black and white. They are constantly to be met with where the country is at all level and open: when disturbed, they take wing and fly over the plain in circles, much after the manner of the green plover or peewit, uttering a harsh grating cry. The best method of getting within range is to use a horse, and ride round them in a circle, gradually contracting it. To this open glade, the name of which I have forgotten, the Nimrods about Grahams-town often resort, and indulge in the exciting sport of wild boar and porcupine hunting. This "chasse" is conducted on



bright moonlight nights, with a gathering of rough strong dogs, the hunters being armed with a bayonet or spear, with which they dispatch the quarry when brought to bay.

I found the Great Fish River, as I had anticipated, still flooded and impassable for waggons; it was, however, ebbing rapidly, and apparently would be fordable on the morrow. During the previous heavy rains, said not to have been equalled for twenty-seven years, it had risen to an immense height, and everywhere overflowed its banks. That part of the bank which formed the descent and ascent of the former waggon-road was entirely swept away, a steep wall on either side of the river remaining in its stead, flanked by a bank of deep and slimy mud. An immense deal of manual labour would consequently be necessary to form a road, by cutting down these walls, and clearing a channel through the mud, before a waggon could take the drift. Accordingly, I thought the sooner we set about it the better; so, having cooked and partaken of a hot tiffin, we cast loose the pickaxes, spades, and shovels, stripped to our shirts, and, half wading, half swimming, succeeded in crossing the river, where, having laboured hard till sundown, and constructed a famous piece of road, we considered our task on that side as completed. Early on the following morning we resumed our labours on our side of the river, and about ten A.M. the work was finished. A party of Boers now hove in sight with three waggons, which they outspanned on the opposite bank, and drove their oxen into the neighbouring hills to graze. Presently, observing us preparing to inspan, they beckoned to me to hold a conference with them across the stream, the object of which was, to endeavour to dissuade me from taking the drift until their oxen should return, under pretence of assisting us, but, in reality, fearing that we should stick fast, and that they should be *forced* to assist us, since, in the event of our waggon sticking before their oxen came up, they would be unable to pass until we were extricated. I saw the move with half an eye, and instantly ordered my men to inspan with all possible dispatch, when we got safely through the river and up the opposite bank, a far more successful result than I had anticipated.

It was a fearful pull for the poor oxen; the waggon stuck fast three times, and was within a hair's breadth of being upset; the water just came up to the bottom boards, but fortunately did not wet any part of the cargo. The Boers seemed much surprised at our performance, for they always entertain the idea that an Englishman's oxen must be inferior to theirs, but this notion is grossly erroneous, the reverse being invariably the case. A Boer will hardly ever flog his oxen when they require it, which, though it may shock the ear of my fair reader, my regard to truth compels me to state is indispensable, oxen being of a strangely stubborn disposition, perfectly different from horses. This, at a future period, I had cause to ascertain practically, when, forsaken by my followers on the borders of the Kalihari desert, I was necessitated daily to inspan and drive my own oxen, which I did, with the assistance of a small Bushman, for a distance of about a thousand miles.

It is a common thing to see a Boer's oxen stick fast on a very moderate ascent, with not above 1000 lbs. or 2000 lbs. weight in the waggon, where an Albany transport-rider would pass him with a load of 6000 lbs.; and it is by no means uncommon to see these Albany men discharging a load of even 8000 lbs. weight at the stores of the Grahamstown merchants, which they have transported with a team of fourteen oxen through the hilly country between that town and Algoa Bay. After crossing the river, the road continued good for about three miles, but after that we found it washed away in many places. Once we stuck fast, and were obliged to dig the waggon out, and broke our trektow three times in extricating it. In other places we were obliged to leave the usual road, and cut a new way through the thorny trees with our axes, the road being cut up with watercourses six, sometimes eight feet deep. At midday we outspanned for two hours, to rest the oxen, on the farm of a Mr. Corrie. Here we met a "smouse," or trader, coming down the country with a drove of about a hundred and fifty very large well-conditioned oxen. He offered me a span at 3*l.* a head; they would have been worth 12*l.* each in England. I felt the sun rather oppressive.

About two P.M. we inspanned, and, having ascended a long and very steep hill, entered upon a new line of country, of wide undulating open plains of rank waving grass, dotted over with the mud-built habitations of white ants; we held on for three hours after sundown, and halted for the night at an uninhabited dilapidated mansion, in which we lighted a fire and cooked our dinner. Having secured our oxen on the yokes, instead of permitting them to graze during the night, we were enabled to march next morning some time before the break of day; and as the rising sun gradually unveiled the landscape, I had the pleasure of beholding for the first time several small herds of springboks scattered over the plain. This exquisitely graceful and truly interesting antelope is very generally found throughout Southern Africa, and is more numerous there than any other variety; it is very nearly allied to the ariel gazelle of Northern Africa, and in its nature and habits reminded me of the saisin of India. A few herds of springboks are still to be met with on the plains in the district of Somerset, on which I had now entered; but as this is one of the nearest to the abodes of men where this species remains, it is of course much hunted, and is annually becoming scarcer. The gentlemen farmers of the surrounding country keep a good breed of greyhounds, with which they have excellent sport in pursuing these antelopes. On beholding the springboks I instantly directed my two horses to be saddled, and, desiring the Hottentots to proceed to a farm in advance, and there outspan, I rode forth with Cobus, taking my two-grooved rifle to endeavour to obtain a shot. I found them extremely wild, and after expending a considerable deal of ammunition, firing at distances of from six to eight hundred yards, I rejoined my waggons, which I found drawn up on a Dutchman's farm, and left the antelopes scathless.

Owing to exposure to the sun while working at the Fish River drift on the preceding days, and also to having discarded coat, waistcoat, and neckcloth since leaving Grahams-town, my arms, neck, and shoulders were much swollen and severely blistered, causing me much pain, and at night preventing me from sleeping. The kind-hearted noë, commiserating my condition, and wishing to alleviate my pain,

informed me that she had an excellent recipe for sunburn, which she had often successfully administered to her husband and sons. One of the chief ingredients of the promised balsam was green tea, which was to be reduced to powder, of which she directed me to send her a little by one of my servants. I did not hear what the other components might have been, but I well know that, on applying the ointment to the raw and swollen parts, it stung me as though it had been a mixture of salt and vinegar, giving me intense pain, and causing me to wish the Boer noë and her ointment in the realms of Pluto, and to hop and dance about like one demented, to the infinite delight and merriment of my sympathising Hottentots.

A peculiar expression in the eyes of these gentlemen, and their general demeanour, inclined me to think that their potations had consisted of some more generous beverage than water during the morning's march; and on examining one of my liquor-cases, I found that I was minus a bottle and a half of gin since yesterday. This is a common failing among this monkey-faced race, nineteen in every twenty Hottentots being drunkards; and they have, moreover, not the slightest scruple of conscience as to who is the lawful proprietor of the liquor, so long as they can get access to it. No locks nor bolts avail; and thus on the Bay-road, the high road between Algoa Bay and Grahamstown, a constant system of pilfering is maintained. In this pursuit these worthies, from long practice, have arrived at considerable skill, and it is usually accomplished in the following manner:—If the liquor is in a cask, a gimlet is inserted, when, a bucket or two of spirit having been drawn off, the aperture is filled with a plug, and, the hoop being replaced, no outward mark is visible. The liquor thus stolen, if missed, and inquiries are made, is very plausibly set down to the score of leakage. A great deal of gin arrives in Grahamstown in square case-bottles, packed in alight red wooden cases. To these the Hottentots devote marked attention, owing to the greater facility of getting at them. Having carefully removed the lid and drained several of the bottles, by drinking, or pouring their contents into the water-casks belonging to the waggons, they either replace the liquor with water, and repack the case and

they found it, or else break the bottles which they have drained and replace them in the case, at the same time taking out a quantity of the chaff in which they had been packed. This is done to delude the merchant into the idea that the loss of liquor occurred owing to breakage from original bad packing; the risk and damage entailed on the proprietors of waggons and owners of merchandise, from the drivers indulging in such a system on the precarious roads of the colony, may be imagined.

After breakfast we continued our march, when I was again tempted to saddle up and give chase to a troop of springboks, one of which I shot: we journeyed on until sundown, when we halted beside a pool of rain-water. Here we found some young Boers and Hottentots, belonging to a neighbouring farm, actively employed in digging out a nest of wild bees; several of them had their eyes nearly closed from the stings which they had received. The spoils of the "bke," however, repaid their pains by twenty pounds of honey. On approaching the nest a large cluster of bees chose my sunburnt arm as a place of rendezvous, from which I could not remove them until I had obtained a bunch of burning grass.

Our march on the following day lay through a mountainous country abounding with rich pasture, covered in many places with picturesque thorny-mimosa trees, detached and in groups, imparting to the country the appearance of an English park. In the forenoon we halted for a couple of hours in a broad well-wooded hollow, where I found abundance of bustard, guinea-fowl, black koran, partridge, and quail. At sundown we encamped at a place called Daka-Boer's Neck, on high ground, where the road crosses a bold and precipitous mountain-range. The mountain-road, along which we trekked the following morning, was extremely steep and rugged: on my right, and high above me, I observed a herd of upwards of a hundred horses, consisting chiefly of brood mares and their foals, pasturing on the hill-side. Three more marches brought us to the village of Cradock, which we reached at dawn of day on Saturday the 2nd of November, having twice again had occasion to cross the **G**reat Fish River.

The country we passed through was bold, mountainous, and barren, excepting along the banks of the river, which were adorned with groves of mimosa, willow, and whitethorn, clad with a profusion of rich yellow blossoms yielding a powerful and fragrant perfume. It was now the spring of the year, and, this season having been peculiarly favoured with rains, a vernal freshness robed these sometimes arid regions, and I consider that I first saw them under very favourable circumstances. On the northern bank, at one of the drifts where we crossed the Fish River, I observed the dry dung in an old sheep-kraal burning; it was smouldering away after the manner of Scotch peat; and on my return from the interior about eighteen months after, on my way to Grahamstown, the dunghill was still burning, and had been so all the time, and nevertheless only two-thirds were consumed. The immense time which these dunghills require to burn is very singular; it is quite a common occurrence for one of them to smoulder for three or four years; and I have been informed by several respectable farmers of Lower Albany, on whose veracity I could rely, that in that district one of these "middens," as they are termed in Scotland, burnt for seven years before it was consumed. The heaviest and most protracted rains seem to affect but little, rarely if ever extinguishing them.

Cradock is a pretty little village situated on the eastern bank of the Great Fish River, by which it is supplied with water and the gardens irrigated; it is inhabited by Dutch and English, and a goodly sprinkling of Hottentots, Mozambiques, and Fingoes. The principal street is wide and adorned with shady trees on every side, among which I observed numbers of peach-trees covered with green fruit. The houses are large and well-built, generally of brick, some in the old Dutch and some in the English style; and each has a considerable garden attached to it: these are tastefully laid out, and contain all the vegetables most used in an English kitchen. Apples, pears, oranges, quinces, nectarines, and grapes abound. The view is bounded on every side by barren, arid, rocky hills and mountains. I marched right *through the town* and outspanned about a quarter of a mile

beyond it; and after breakfast returned on foot to purchase necessities for myself and servants. Numbers of Dutch Boers with their wives and families were assembling to hold their "Nachtmaal" or sacrament.

About eleven A.M. we inspanned, and continued our journey about five miles, crossing the Great Fish River twice, when I halted for some hours upon its bank on account of my oxen, the grass in the vicinity of the town having been very bare. This was the fifth and last time we crossed the Great Fish River. Here about a dozen waggons passed us on their way to Cradock, containing Dutch Boers with their fraus and families. Several of these were horse-waggons, drawn by eight or ten horses in each waggon, harnessed two abreast, and drawing by straps across their breasts, instead of collars. These straps are generally manufactured of the skin of the lion when it is to be obtained, that being reckoned tougher and more enduring than any other. These long teams are well managed and dexterously driven by the Boers, one man holding the reins and another the whip. In the afternoon I again inspanned, and continued my march till sundown. The road since I left Cradock had improved, and was now fine and level, leading through a wide, open, undulating strath along the north-eastern bank of the Fish River. The surrounding country presented in every direction endless chains of barren stony mountains; the bold range of the Rhinaster Berge standing forth in grand relief to the westward; not a tree was to be seen except a few thorny mimosas in some of the more favoured hollows of the hills and along the banks of the river; the country being covered with grass and heaths, dwarfish shrubs, and small thorny bushes.

The sun during the day was powerful, but a cool breeze prevailed from the south. Ever since I left Grahamstown the weather had been very pleasant, and seldom oppressively hot, except in the low-lying hollows, where the breezes are not felt. South Africa, though its climate is dry and sultry, is nevertheless very salubrious, being surrounded on three sides by the sea, off which a healthy breeze prevails throughout the greater part of the year. At certain seasons, however, *northerly breezes* prevail, which are termed by the colonists

"hot winds." On these occasions the wind feels as though it had passed through a furnace in a glass-foundry, being heated in its passage over the burning sands of the Great Kalihari desert.

In Cradock I engaged another Hottentot, named Jacob, in the capacity of after-rider. Having followed the course of the Fish River for a distance of about nine miles, our road inclined to the right in a more northerly direction, and we here bade that stream a final adieu. Two more marches through a succession of wide, undulating, sterile plains, bounded on all sides by bleak and barren mountains, brought us to the borders of the immense flats surrounding the Thebus Mountain.

Having followed along its eastern bank an insignificant little stream dignified by the appellation of the Brak River, I arrived at the farm of Mynheer Besta, a pleasant hospitable Boer, and a field-cornet of the district, which means a sort of resident magistrate. Here we halted to breakfast, and Besta, who is a keen sportsman, entertained me with various anecdotes and adventures which had occurred to him during the earlier days of his sporting career in Albany, where he had once resided. He informed me that the black wildebeest and springbok were extremely numerous on the plains immediately beyond his farm, which made me resolve to saddle up and go in quest of them as soon as I had breakfasted. The flesh of these animals forms one of the chief articles of food among the Boers and their servants, who inhabit the districts in which they are abundant; and the skulls and horns of hundreds of black wildebeest and springbok were to be seen piled in heaps and scattered about the outhouses of the farm. Adjoining the house was a well-watered garden with very green trees and corn in it, a most pleasing contrast to the surrounding barren country.

Having directed my men to proceed to the next farm along the banks of the Brak River, I rode forth with Cobus and held a northerly course across the flats. I soon perceived herds of springbok in every direction, which, on my following at a hard gallop, continued to join one another until the whole plain seemed alive with them. Upon our crossing a sort of



ridge on the plain, I beheld the whole country, as far as my eye could reach, actually white with springboks, with here and there a herd of black gnoos or wildebeest, prancing and capering in every direction, whirling and lashing their white tails as they started off in long files on our approach. Having pursued them for many hours, and fired about a dozen shots at these and the springboks, at distances of from four to six hundred yards, and only wounded one, which I lost, I turned my horse's head for camp. The evening set in dark and lowering, with rattling thunder and vivid flashes of lightning on the surrounding hills, and I accordingly rode hard for my waggon, which I just reached in time to escape a deluge of rain which lasted all night. The Brak River came down a red foaming torrent, but fell very rapidly in the morning. This river is called Brak from the flavour of its waters, which, excepting in the rainy season, are barely palatable. My day's sport, although unsuccessful, was most exciting. I did not feel much mortified at my want of success, for I was well aware that recklessly jaging after the game in the manner in which I had been doing, although highly exhilarating, was not the way to fill my bag. Delight at beholding so much noble game in countless herds on their native plains was uppermost in my mind, and I felt that at last I had reached the borders of those glorious hunting-lands, the accounts of which had been my chief inducements to visit this remote corner of the globe; and I rejoiced that I had not allowed the advice of my acquaintances to influence my movements.

As I rode along in the intense and maddening excitement of the chace, I felt a glad feeling of unrestrained freedom, which was common to me during my career in Africa, and which I had seldom so fully experienced; and, notwithstanding the many thorns which surrounded my roses during the days and nights of toil and hardship which I afterwards encountered, I shall ever refer to those times as by far the brightest and happiest of my life. On the following morning I rode through the Brak River to visit Mynheer Pocheter, with the intention of buying some horses of him, but he had none to dispose of. I met the old fellow coming in from the "feldt," with his long single-barrelled roer and enormous

flint-lock, with the usual bullock's horn powder-flask dangling at his side. He had gone out with his Hottentot before the dawn of day, and taken up a position in a little neck in an uneven part of the plain, through which the springboks were in the habit of passing before sunrise. It is in spots of this description that the Boers build little watching-places with flat stones, from which they generally obtain a shot every morning and evening, and at such distances as to insure success; to use their own words, "they secure a buck from these places, skot for skot," meaning a buck for every shot. On this occasion, however, our friend had been unfortunate, returning without venison, although I had heard the loud report of his "roer" a short time previously. The report made by these unwieldy guns of the Boers, charged with a large handful of coarse gunpowder, is to be heard at an amazing distance through the calm atmosphere of the high table-lands: and during my stay on the flats adjoining Thebus Mountain, scarcely an hour elapsed at morning, noon, or eve, but the distant booming of a Dutchman's gun saluted the ear.

Mynheer Pocheter asked me in to take some breakfast with him, which I did, Cobus acting as interpreter, mine host not understanding a word of English, and I not having at that time acquired the Dutch language, with which I subsequently became thoroughly conversant. After breakfast I took leave of Mynheer Pocheter, and having directed the waggon to strike out of the direct road to Colesberg, and hold across country to the abode of a Boer named Hendrick Strydom, where the game was represented to me as being extremely plentiful, I again rode forth, accompanied by Cobus, to wage war with the springboks. We pricked over the plain, holding an easterly course, and found them, as yesterday, in thousands, with here and there a herd of black wildebeest. Finding that by jaging on the open plain I could not get within four or five hundred yards of them, I left my horses and after-rider, and set off on foot to a low range of rocky hills, where I performed two difficult stalks upon a springbok and a wildebeest, both of which I wounded severely, but lost. When stalking in upon the springbok I took off my shoes, and had *very great difficulty in finding them again*. I suffered much

from thirst. The sun was very powerful, and, notwithstanding the heavy rains of the preceding evening, a drop of water was nowhere to be found.

In the afternoon I came to a pool of mud; the little water it contained was almost boiling; I was, however, most thankful to find it, and tears of delight came into my eyes on discovering it. How trifling was this to the trials from thirst which I have often since undergone! Shortly after this I fell in with my servant, who, astonished at my long absence, had come in search of me with the horses. I was right glad to fall in with him, and, having got into the saddle, I rode hard across the plain for my waggon. On my way thither I took up a position behind a ridge, and directed Cobus to jag a herd of springbok towards me, which he did most successfully, sending upwards of a hundred of them right in my teeth. I, however, was still unfortunate, firing both barrels into the herd without doing any apparent injury. On reaching my waggon, which I found outspanned at the desolate abode of Mynheer Hendrick Strydom, I took a mighty draught of gin and water, and then walked, followed by my interpreter carrying glasses and a bottle of Hollands, to the door of Strydom, to cultivate the acquaintance of himself and frau, and wearing the garb of old Gaul, in which I generally hunted during my first expedition, to the intense surprise of the primitive Boers. Shaking Strydom most cordially by the hand, I told him that I was a "Berg Scot," or Mountain Scotchman, and that it was the custom in my country, when friends met, to pledge one another in a bumper of spirits; at the same time, suiting the action to the word, I filled him a brimming glass. This was my invariable practice on first meeting a Boer. I found it a never-failing method of gaining his good-will, and he always replied that the Scotch were the best people in the world.

The Boers are rather partial to Scotchmen, although they detest the sight of an Englishman. They have an idea that the Scotch, like themselves, were a nation conquered by the English, and that, consequently, we trek in the same yoke as themselves; and further, a number of their ministers are Scotchmen. Hendrick Strydom was a tall, sunburnt, wild-

looking creature, with light, sandy hair, and a long, shaggy red beard. He was a keen hunter, and himself and household subsisted, in a great measure, by the proceeds of his long single-barrelled roer. His frau was rather a nice little woman, with a fresh colour, and fine dark eyes and eyebrows, and displayed her good taste by taking a fancy to me, but perhaps the tea and coffee which she found I bestowed with a liberal hand might account for her partiality. These were Boers of the poorer order, and possessed but little of this world's goods, and their abode was in keeping with their means; it was a small mud cottage, with a roof which afforded scanty protection from the heavy periodical rains. The fire burnt on the hearthstone, and a hole in the roof served at once for a window and chimney; the rafters and bare mud walls were adorned with a profusion of skins of wild animals, and endless festoons of "biltongue" or sun-dried flesh of game. Green fields or gardens there were none whatever; the wild Karroo plain stretched away from the house on all sides; and during the night the springboks and wildebeests pastured before the door.

The servants consisted of one old Bushman and his wife, and the whole of their worldly possessions were an old waggon, a span of oxen, a few milch cows, and a small herd of goats and sheep. Strydom's revenue seemed principally to be obtained by manufacturing ashes, with which he was in the habit of loading up his waggon and trekking many days' journey into other districts, where he sold them to richer Boers. The manner of obtaining this ash is first to dig up the bushes and collect them on the plains. There they are left until sufficiently dry to burn, and, a calm day being selected, they are set on fire, and the ashes subsequently stowed away in large sacks made of the raw skins of wildebeests and zebras, when they are fit for immediate use. These ashes are in great demand amongst the Boers, as being an indispensable ingredient in the manufacture of soap; every Boer in South Africa makes his own soap. The low, succulent, green bush from which the ashes are obtained is only found in certain districts, and in these plains it was very *abundant*.

Strydom, having sympathised with me on my continued run of ill-luck, remarked that it was quite a common thing when "jaging" on the principle which I had followed. He was, he said, aware that in hunting on that system an immense amount of ammunition was expended with little profit, and that he, being a poor man, very rarely indulged in it; but that, if I would accompany him after I had taken my coffee, there being still about two hours of daylight, he would show me his method, and he thought it very probable that we should get a buck that evening. Accordingly, having partaken of coffee, Strydom and I stalked forth together across the wild and desolate-looking plain, followed by two Hottentots with large herds of graceful springboks pasturing on every side. He placed me behind a small green bush, about eighteen inches in height, upon a wide open flat, instructing me to lie on my breast; and having proceeded some hundred yards, and taken up a similar position, he sent the Hottentots round a herd of springboks which were feeding on the plain, to endeavour to move them gently towards us. It was a very beautiful thing altogether, and succeeded well. The whole herd came on slowly, right towards where I lay, until within a hundred yards, when I selected a fine fat buck, which I rolled over with a ball in the shoulder. This was the first fair shot that I had obtained at a springbok on these plains. I have always been reckoned, by those who know my shooting, to be a very fair rifle-shot, whether standing or running, but I do not profess to make sure work much beyond one hundred and ten paces, or thereabouts. The springbok is so termed by the colonists on account of its peculiar habit of springing or taking extraordinary bounds, rising to an incredible height in the air, when pursued; the extraordinary manner in which they are capable of springing is best seen when they are chased by a dog. On these occasions away start the herd, with a succession of strange perpendicular bounds, rising with curved loins high into the air, and at the same time elevating the snowy folds of long white hair on their haunches and along their back, which imparts to them a peculiar fairy-like appearance, different from any other animal. They bound to the height of ten or twelve feet, with

the elasticity of an India-rubber ball, clearing at each spring from twelve to fifteen feet of ground, without apparently the slightest exertion. In performing this spring they appear for an instant as if suspended in the air, when down come all four feet again together, and, striking the plain, away they soar again, as if about to take flight. The herd only adopt this motion for a few hundred yards, when they subside into a light elastic trot, arching their graceful necks and lowering their noses to the ground, as if in sportive mood; presently pulling up, they face about, and reconnoitre the object of their alarm. In crossing any path or waggon-road on which men have lately trod, the springbok invariably clears it by a single bound; and when a herd of perhaps many thousands have to cross a track of the sort, it is extremely beautiful to see how each antelope performs the surprising feat, so suspicious are they of the ground on which their enemy, man, has trodden. They bound in a similar manner when passing to leeward of a lion, or any other animal of which they entertain an instinctive dread.

The accumulated masses of living creatures which the springboks exhibit on the greater migrations is utterly astounding, and any traveller witnessing it as I have, and giving a true description of what he had seen, can hardly expect to be believed, so marvellous is the scene. They have been well and truly compared to the wasting swarms of locusts, so familiar to the traveller in this land of wonders. Like them they consume everything green in their course, laying waste vast districts in a few hours, and ruining in a single night the fruits of the farmer's toil. The course adopted by the antelopes is generally such as to bring them back to their own country by a route different from that by which they set out. Thus their line of march frequently forms something like a vast oval, or an extensive square, of which the diameter may be some hundred miles, and the time occupied in this migration may vary from six months to a year.

Two days before this I brought down a koran flying with a single ball. Our chances for this evening being now over, and night setting in, I returned to the farm with Strydom in high spirits.

## CHAPTER IV.

FROM HENDRICK STRYDOM'S TO COLESBERG.

At an early hour on the morning of the 6th, while I was yet in bed, Hendrick Strydom and his frau were standing over the fire, alongside of my waggon, with a welcome supply of sweet milk, and hurrying on the indolent Hottentots to prepare my breakfast, and rouse their slothful master—the earliest dawn being, as he affirmed, the best time to go after the springboks. On hearing their voices I rose, and, having breakfasted, we shouldered our roers, walked nearly a mile across the plain, and took up positions behind two very low bushes, about three hundred yards apart, having instructed our Hottentots to endeavour to drive the springboks towards us. We had two beats, but were unlucky both times, each of us wounding and losing a springbok. In the evening we went out again to hunt on the same system, on a wide flat to the west of his house, where we lay down behind very low bushes, in the middle of the bucks. We lay here on our breasts for two hours, with herds of springboks moving all round us, our Hottentots manœuvring in the distance. One small troop came within shot of me, when I sent my bullet spinning through a graceful doe, which bounded forward a hundred yards, and, staggering for a moment, fell over and expired. A little after this, I suddenly perceived a large paow or bustard walking on the plain before me. These birds are very wary and difficult to approach; I therefore resolved to have a shot at him, and lay like a stone until he came within range, when I sent a bullet through him. He managed, however, to fly about a quarter of a mile, when he alighted; and on going up to the place half an hour after, I found him lying dead, with his head stuck into a bush of heath.

Strydom had two family shots, and brought down with each a well-conditioned buck. In high good-humour with our success, we proceeded to gralloch or disembowel the quarry; after which, each of us shouldering a buck, we returned home in heavy marching order. On the following day I had the pleasure of beholding the first flight of locusts I had seen since my arrival in the colony. We were standing in the middle of a plain of unlimited length, and about five miles across, when I observed them advancing; on they came like a snow-storm, flying slow and steady, about a hundred yards from the ground. I remained looking at them until the air was darkened with their masses, while the plain on which we stood became densely covered with them. Far as my eye could reach—east, west, north, and south—they stretched in one unbroken cloud; and more than an hour elapsed before their devastating legions had swept by. I was particularly struck with this most wonderful and truly interesting sight; and I remember at the time my feeling was one of self-gratulation at having visited a country where I could witness such a scene. On this day and on the morrow Strydom and I continued to wage successful war against the springboks; we crossed the small stream called the Thebus River, and hunted on the plains to the east. On one occasion Hendrick brought down two fat bucks at one shot, which he assured me was not an uncommon event with him.

On the morning of the 9th, Strydom and I having resolved over night to go in quest of a troop of ostriches which his Hottentot reported as frequenting the plains immediately adjacent to the Thebus Mountain, we started our men two hours before the dawn of day; and after an early breakfast saddled up, and rode direct for the Thebus Mountain. This remarkable mountain, which I shall ever remember as the leading feature on the plains where I first really commenced my African hunting, is of peculiar shape, resembling a cone depressed at the apex, and surmounted by a round tower. It is also remarkable as being considerably higher than the surrounding mountains with which the plains are bounded and intersected. As we rode along, a balmy freshness pervaded the morning air; we passed through herds of



thousands of springboks, with small herds of wildebeest scattered amongst them; and I fired two or three very long shots without success. Strydom, however, was more fortunate; he fired into a herd of about a hundred bucks at three hundred yards, and hit one fine old buck right in the middle of the forehead, the ball passing clean through his skull. We hid him in a hole in the ground, and covered him with bushes, and then rode on to our Hottentots, whom we found waiting beside a small fountain in a pass formed by a wide gap in a low range of hills, situated between two extensive plains, thickly covered with game. I took up my position in some rushes in the middle of the pass, and remained there for upwards of eight hours, during which our boys were supposed to be endeavouring to drive the game towards us.

The Boer took up the best pass about a quarter of a mile to my right. Before we had been an hour at our passes, the boys drove up four beautiful ostriches, which came and stood within fifty yards of Strydom, but, alas! he was asleep. About this time I was busy trying to remember and practise a childish amusement which once delighted me as much as rifle-shooting—namely, making a cap of rushes—when, on suddenly lifting up my eyes, I saw standing within eighty yards of me about a dozen springboks, which were coming up to the pass behind me. I snatched up my rifle, and, lying flat on my breast, sent a bullet through the best buck in the troop, smashing his shoulder; he ran about fifty yards, and fell dead. I unfortunately left him lying exposed in the pass, the consequence of which was that three other troops of springboks, which were coming up as he had come, were turned to the right-about by his carcase.

It was amusing to see the birds and beasts of prey assembling to dispute the carcase with me. First came the common black and white carrion-crow, then the vultures; the jackals knew the cry of the vultures, and they too came sneaking from their hiding-places in the rocks and holes of the ant-bear in the plains, to share in the feast, whilst I was obliged to remain a quiet spectator, not daring to move, as the game was now in herds on every side of me, and I expected to see

ostriches every moment. Presently a herd of wildebeest came thundering down upon me, and passed within shot; I put a bullet into one of these, too far behind the shoulder, which, as is always the case with deer and antelopes, did not seem to affect him in the slightest degree. In the afternoon we altered our positions, and sent the boys to drive the plain near which I had been sitting all day. The number of bucks now before our eyes beat all computation; the plain extended, without a break, until the eye could not discern any object smaller than a castle, and throughout the whole of this extent were herds of thousands and tens of thousands of springboks, interspersed with troops of wildebeest. The boys sent us one herd of about three hundred springboks, into which Strydom let fly at about three hundred yards, and turned them and all the rest.

It was now late in the day, so we made for home, taking up the buck which he had shot in the morning. As we cantered along the flats, Hendrick, tempted by a herd of springboks, which were drawn up together in a compact body, jumped off his horse, and, giving his ivory sight an elevation of several feet, let drive at them, the distance being about five hundred yards. As the troop bounded away, we could distinguish a light-coloured object lying in the short heath, which he pronounced to be a springbok, and on going up we found one fine old doe lying dead, shot through the spine. On this, and every day since I arrived at these flats, I was astonished at the number of skeletons and well-bleached skulls with which the plains were covered. Thousands of skulls of springbok and wildebeest were strewed around wherever the hunter turned his eye. The sun was extremely powerful all day, but, being intent on the sport, I did not feel it until I found my legs burnt; my dress as usual was the kilt, with a grey stalking cap. On reaching home the following day, a large party of natives, belonging to the chief Moshesh, arrived at the farm; these poor men were travelling in quest of employment. Numbers of natives annually visit the colony, and work for the Boers, making stone enclosures for their cattle, and large dams or embankments across little streams in the mouths of valleys, for the purpose of collecting

water in the rainy season, to supply their flocks and herds during the protracted droughts of summer—they are paid for their labour with young cows or she-goats. The recent rains having washed away the embankment of a dam situated in a distant range of hills, on the borders of the farm, Strydom engaged these men to repair it. The vicinity of the dam being a favourite haunt for quaggas, and it being necessary that Strydom should go there on the morrow, we resolved to hunt in the neighbouring district, in which were situated some high and rugged hills; accordingly, next day we sallied forth, and I ascended to one of the highest pinnacles, where I managed to shoot a rhode-raebok. Joining Strydom shortly afterwards, we hunted over another range of the same hills, where we fell in with three quaggas and other game. Night was now fast setting in, so we descended, and made for home; cantering along, we observed what we took to be a herd of quaggas and a bull wildebeest standing in front of us, upon which we jumped off our horses, and, bending our bodies, approached them to fire.

It being now quite dark, it was hard to tell what sort of game we were going to fire at; Strydom, however, whispered to me they were quaggas, and they certainly appeared to be such. His gun snapped three times at the wildebeest, upon which they all set off at a gallop; he was riding my stallion, and let go his bridle when he ran in to fire, taking advantage of which the horse set off after them. I then mounted "The Cow," and after riding hard for about a mile came up to them. They were now standing still, and the stallion in the middle of them. I made him out by his saddle, and, jumping off my horse in a state of intense excitement, ran forward, fired both barrels of my two-grooved rifle into the quaggas, and heard the bullets tell loudly. They then started off, but the stallion was soon once more fighting in the middle of them; I was astonished and delighted to remark how my horse was able to take up their attention, so that they appeared heedless of the reports of my rifle.

In haste I commenced loading, but to my dismay found that I had left my loading-rod with Hendrick. Mounting "The Cow," I rode nearer to the quaggas, and was delighted

to find that they allowed my horse to come within easy shot. It was now very dark, but I set off in the hope to fall in with Hendrick on the wide plain, and galloped along shouting with all my might, but in vain. I then rode across the plain for the hill, to try to find some bush large enough to make a ramrod; in this, by the greatest chance, I succeeded, and, being provided with a knife, I cut a good ramrod, loaded my rifle, and rode off to seek the quaggas once more. I soon fell in with them, and, coming within shot, fired at them right and left, and heard both bullets tell, upon which they galloped across the plain with the stallion still after them. One of them, however, was very hard hit, and soon dropped astern—the stallion remained to keep him company.

About this time the moon shone forth faintly. I galloped on after the troop, and, soon coming up with them, rode on one side, when, dismounting and dropping on my knee, I sent a bullet through the shoulder of the last quagga; he staggered forward, fell to the ground with a heavy crash, and expired. The rest of the troop charged wildly around him, snorting and prancing like the wild horses in Mazeppa, and then set off at full speed across the plain; I did not wait to bleed the quagga, but, mounting my horse, galloped on after the troop, nevertheless I could not overtake them. Returning, I endeavoured to find the quagga that I had last shot, but owing to the darkness, and my having no mark to guide me on the plain, I failed to find him. I then set off to try for the quagga which had dropped astern with the stallion; having searched some time in vain, I dismounted, and, laying my head on the ground, made out two dark objects which turned out to be what I sought. On my approaching, the quagga tried to make off, when I sent a ball through his shoulder, which laid him low. Going up to him in the full expectation of inspecting for the first time one of these animals, what was my disappointment and vexation to find a fine brown gelding, with two white stars on his forehead! The truth now flashed upon me; Strydom and I had both been mistaken; instead of quaggas, the waggon-team of a neighbouring Dutchman had afforded me my evening's shooting!

*I caught my stallion and rode home, intending to pay for*

the horses which I had killed and wounded; but on telling my story to Hendrick, with which he seemed extremely amused, he told me not to say a word about it, as the owners of the horses were very avaricious, and would make me pay treble their value, and that if I kept quiet it would be supposed they had been killed either by lions or wild Bushmen. We continued hunting springboks till the 17th, during which time we enjoyed a constant run of good luck, and so fascinating was the sport that I felt as though I never could tire of it; it was, indeed, a country where a person who loved rifle-shooting ought to have been content. Every morning, on opening my eyes, the first thing which I saw, without raising my head from the pillow, were herds of hundreds of springboks grazing before me on the plains. On the 17th an old friend of Strydom's, a Boer from Magalisberg, outspanned on the farm. He had been to Grahamstown with a load of ivory, and was returning home with supplies of tea, coffee, clothing, &c., sufficient for two years' consumption. The new comer was accompanied by his wife, two tall gawky-looking daughters, and half a dozen noisy geese which were secured in a cage on the trap of the waggon. This Boer informed me that I could get all the rarer animals, which I wished to shoot, in his vicinity, namely, sable antelope, roan antelope, eland, waterbuck, koodoo, pallah, elephant, black and white rhinoceros, hippopotamus, giraffe, buffalo, lion, &c., and told me he had shot elephants there with tusks weighing 100 lbs. each, and upwards of seven feet in length. He advised me not to visit that country before the end of April, as my horses would assuredly die of a never-failing distemper which prevails in the interior, within a certain latitude, during the summer months.

Being now anxious to devote my attention more particularly to black wildebeests, of which I had not yet secured a specimen, I resolved to proceed to the plains beyond the Thebus Mountain, where the Boer informed me they abounded. Accordingly, having presented my friend Hendrick with a coffee-mill and some crockery to which his frau had taken a fancy, and also with a supply of coarse gunpowder, which is to a Boer a most acceptable gift, I inspanned and took leave

of him about 9 P.M. We held for the Thebus Mountain, steering across the open plains and following no track, with springboks and wildebeests whistling and bellowing on every side of us. About midnight we halted by a fountain near the pass where a few days before I had lain in ambush for eight hours, and, as it was probable that the oxen would wander during the night, we secured them on the yokes. Two of my team and both my horses were reported missing when we left the farm, and I had left Cobus to seek for them.

In the afternoon of the next day my two servants joined me, bringing with them the lost oxen, but having failed to find the steeds. At night I took up a position in an old shooting-hole beside the vley, to watch for wildebeests; several jackals, wildebeests, quaggas, and hyænas came to drink during the night, but, not being able to see the sight of my rifle, I did not fire. Here I remained until the bright star of morning had risen far above the horizon, and day was just beginning to dawn when, gently raising my head and looking round, I saw, on one side of me, four wildebeests, and on the other ten. They were coming to drink, and slowly and suspiciously approached the water, but, having convinced themselves that all was right, they trotted boldly up and commenced drinking; selecting the finest bull, I fired, and sent a bullet through his shoulder, when, splashing through the water, he bounded madly forward, and, having run about a hundred yards, rolled over in the dewy grass. I did not show myself, other game being in sight, but lay still in my hole. In about an hour an old springbok fed up to within three hundred yards of me, and continued browsing there for a considerable time; as no more wildebeests seemed to be approaching, and I was very hungry, I put up my sight, took a cool, calculating aim at him, and sent the ball through the middle of his shoulder. I then left my hole, and, having inspected the wildebeest bull, which was a noble specimen, walked up to my waggon and sent the boys to cut up the venison and preserve the head carefully.

On the following morning I woke as day dawned, and held for my hole beside the vley, but had not gone two hundred yards round the hillock when I saw an old springbok feeding,

which I stalked, and broke his foreleg. He went off towards the waggon, when the boys slipped Gauger (one of my greyhounds), who at once ran into him and pulled him down. Having lain about an hour at the vley, two old wildebeests approached up wind, and, suspecting the ground, described a wide semicircle, as the red-deer do in the Highlands. I wounded one of them, but he did not drop; I managed, however, to send a ball through the shoulder of the other, when he ran several hundred yards, whisking his long white tail as if all right, and suddenly rolled over in full career. His skin had a delicious smell of the grass and wild herbs on which these animals lie and feed. On proceeding to my waggon, I found all my men asleep. Having gralloched the wildebeest, we bore him bodily to the waggon on the "lechteruit," which is a bar of hard wood used in greasing the waggon-wheels, when I immediately set about curing the head, it being a very fine one.

Cobus returned the following morning, having found my two horses. While taking my breakfast I observed a gentleman approaching on horseback; this was Mr. Paterson, an officer of the 91st, a detachment of which was then quartered at Colesberg. Lieutenant Borrow, a brother-officer of mine, had intrusted me with the care of a rifle for Mr. Paterson, and, as I had been a long time on the road, he had now come to look after it. He was a keen sportsman, and I had much pleasure in meeting so agreeable a person in the wilderness; having joined me in my rough breakfast with a true hunter's appetite, we rode forth together to look for a wildebeest I had wounded in the morning, expecting to find him dead. On reaching the ground we found five small herds of wildebeests charging about the plain, and for a long time could not discover the wounded one; at length I perceived an old bull with his head drooping, which I at once pronounced to be my friend, and, dismounting, we watched him for a short time—the others inclined to make off, but seemed unwilling to leave him. Being now convinced that this was the wildebeest we sought, we determined to give him chase, and try to ride into him; but, just as we had come to this resolution, he fell violently to the ground, raising a cloud of dust, and riding up to him we found him dead.

Paterson and I then made for the vley, and we had not proceeded two hundred yards when, on looking back, I saw about thirty large vultures standing on the wildebeest, which in a very short space of time they no doubt devoured. Paterson left me on the morrow, and rode back to Colesberg, having first extracted a promise that I would follow him within three days; I accordingly hunted until that time had expired, when I reluctantly inspanned and marched upon Colesberg. Three long marches brought us to the farm of a Boer named Penar, who had been recommended to me as having a good stamp of horse, and being reasonable in his prices. I was however disappointed with his stud, and, finding him exorbitant in his demands, no business was transacted. The country continued much the same; wide Karroo plains bounded by abrupt rocky mountains; one more long march brought us within five miles of our destination, where I halted for the night.

Having taken an early breakfast on the 27th, we trekked into Colesberg, where, having chosen a position for my camp, I outspanned, and took up my quarters with Paterson. Colesberg is so called from a conspicuous, lofty table-mountain in its immediate vicinity, which takes its name from a former governor of the colony; the town is situated in a confined hollow, surrounded on all sides by low rocky hills. The formation of these rocks is igneous, and the way in which they are distributed very remarkable. Large and shapeless masses are heaped together and piled one above another, as if by the hand of some mighty giant of the olden time. Colesberg is well supplied with water from a strong fountain which bursts from the base of one of these rocky hillocks above the level of the town, and by which the small gardens adjoining the houses are irrigated; abundance of water is the only advantage the situation can boast of. Here are several large stores, from which the Boers can obtain every necessary article in their domestic economy. Numbers of these farmers attend the market weekly with their waggons, bringing in the produce of their farms and gardens; and at the *Nachmal*, which is administered four times every year, the town is inundated with Boers, who bring in their families in horse-waggons. *Owing to the unsettled state of the country, troops were then*



stationed at Colesberg. The garrison consisted of about two hundred men of the 91st, under command of my cousin, Colonel Campbell, and one company of the Cape mounted Rifles, commanded by Captain Donovan. Colesberg was in those days a pleasant quarter, as there was not much pipeclay, and very good shooting could be obtained within a few hours of the cantonment.

In the forenoon we had some rifle practice at a large granite stone above the town, which the privates of the 91st were wont to pepper on ball-practice days. On this occasion I saw some very good shooting by Campbell, Yarborough, Bailey, and Paterson, all officers of the 91st, and about the four best shots on the frontier. These four Nimrods had a short time previously boldly challenged any four Dutchmen of the Graaf Reinets or Colesberg districts to shoot against them; the challenge was accepted by four Dutchmen, who of course got "jolly well licked."

After spending a few days very pleasantly with the garrison, I resolved to hunt on and about the frontiers until the end of March, at which time the horse-distemper begins to subside. In Colesberg I purchased, at the recommendation of Captain Donovan, a second waggon of the cap-tent kind, which turned out to be an unusually good one; its price was 50*l*. I also purchased an excellent span of black and white oxen from a Dutch blacksmith in the town, and from Donovan a dark-brown horse, which I named Colesberg; his price was 300 dollars, and he was well worth double that sum, for a better steed I never crossed. I also bought from a Boer in the town another horse, well known to the garrison by the sobriquet of the "Immense Brute." This animal was once the property of Captain Christie of the 91st; and on one occasion having wandered, an advertisement appeared in one of the frontier papers relative to an "immense brute" in the shape of a tall bay horse, the property of Captain Christie, &c. &c., in consequence of which he was distinguished by this elegant appellation. I exchanged my brown stallion with Colonel Campbell for an active grey, which I considered better adapted to my work. Glass was at this time at a premium in Colesberg, every window in the town having been smashed by a recent hailstorm.

I loaded up my new waggon with barley, oats, and forage for my horses, they having very hard work before them—hunting the oryx, upon which I was more immediately bent, being more trying to horses than any other sport in South Africa.

My intention was to revisit Colesberg in four or five months, and refit preparatory to starting for the far interior. I left the skulls and specimens of natural history which I had already collected in the charge of my friend Mr. Dickson, a merchant in Colesberg. During my stay there my men were in a constant state of beastly intoxication, and gave me much trouble, and my oxen and horses were constantly reported in the "skit-kraal." I engaged one more Hottentot, named John Stofolus, as driver to the new waggon; he was an active stout little man, and very neat-handed at stuffing the heads of game, preserving specimens, or any other little job I might give him to do. He was, however, extremely fond of fighting his comrades, and ever boasting of his own prowess; but when his courage was put to the proof in assisting me to hunt the more dangerous animals, he proved himself wofully deficient.

## CHAPTER V.

## FROM COLESBERG ACROSS THE DESERT—BUSHMEN.

ON the evening of the 2nd of December, with considerable difficulty I collected my drunken servants, my oxen and horses, and, taking leave of my kind entertainers, trekked out of Colesberg, steering west for the vast Karroo plains, where the gemsbok were said to be still abundant. It was agreed that Campbell should follow me on the second day to hunt springbok and black wildebeest in a district through which I was to travel; and Paterson had applied for a fortnight's leave, with the intention of joining me in the gemsbok country, and enjoying along with me, for a few days, the exciting sport of jaging that antelope. I did not proceed very far on the evening of my departure, my men being intoxicated, and having several times very nearly capsized the waggons; I halted shortly after sundown, when, all the work with the oxen and horses falling upon me, and no fuel being at hand, I was obliged to content myself with dining on a handful of raw meal and a glass of gin-and-water. The following day we performed two long marches, crossing the Sea-Cow River, and halted as it grew dark on a Boer's farm, where the plains were covered with springbok. Here Campbell had instructed me to await his arrival, and next morning he was seen approaching the waggons, mounted on the Immense Brute, and leading two others.

Having breakfasted, we started on horseback to jag springbok and wildebeest, ordering the waggons to proceed to a vley about four miles to the westward. We galloped about the plains, loading and firing for about six hours; the game was very wild—I wounded three springboks and one wildebeest, but lost them all. Campbell shot two springboks. The first

was entirely eaten by the vultures (notwithstanding the bushes with which we had covered him), and skinned as neatly as if done by the hand of man; the second had its leg broken, and was making off, when a jackal suddenly appeared on the bare plain, and, giving him chase, after a good course ran into him. This is a very remarkable but not unfrequent occurrence; it often happens when a springbok is thus wounded, one or more jackals suddenly appear and assist the hunter in capturing his quarry. In the more distant hunting-lands of the interior it sometimes occurs that the lion assists the sportsman in a similar manner with the larger animals; and though this may appear like a traveller's story, it is nevertheless true, and instances of the kind happened both to myself and to Mr. Oswell of the H.E.I.C.S., a dashing sportsman, and one of the best hunters I ever met, who performed two hunting expeditions into the interior. Mr. Oswell and a companion were one day galloping along the shady banks of the Limpopo, in full pursuit of a wounded buffalo, when they were suddenly joined by three lions, who seemed determined to dispute the chase with them; the buffalo held stoutly on, followed by the three lions, Oswell and his companion bringing up the rear; and it was not long before the lions sprang upon the mighty bull and dragged him to the ground, when the most terrific scuffle ensued. Mr. Oswell and his friend then approached and opened their fire upon the royal family, and, as each ball struck the lions, they seemed to consider it was a poke from the horns of the buffalo, and redoubled their attentions to him. At length the sportsmen succeeded in bowling over two of the lions, upon which the third, finding the ground too hot for him, made off.

Next morning, having bathed and breakfasted, Campbell and I parted; he for Colesberg and I for the Karroo. I trekked on all day, and, having performed a march of twenty-five miles, halted at sundown on the farm of old Wessel, whom I found very drunk—my road lay through vast plains, intersected with ridges of stony hills. On these plains I found the game in herds exceeding anything I had yet seen—springbok in troops of at least ten thousand; also large bodies of *quaggas*, *wildebeest*, *blesbok*, and several ostriches. I had

hoped to purchase some horses from Wessel, but he was too drunk to transact any business, informing me that he was a Boer, and could not endure the sight of Englishmen, at the same time shoving me out of the house, much to the annoyance of his wife and daughters, who seemed rather nice people.

Two more days of hard marching, under a burning sun, brought me to the farm of Mynheer Stinkum, which I reached late on the evening of the 7th. He informed me that about fifteen miles to the west of his farm I should fall in with a Boer of the wandering tribe, who would direct me to a remote vley in the Karroo, a good many miles beyond his encampment, to which he advised me at once to proceed and hunt in its vicinity. He represented that district as not having been recently disturbed by hunters, and doubted not but I should find gemsbok and other varieties of game abundant.

It being now summer, flies swarmed in fearful numbers in the abodes of the Boers, attracted thither by the smell of meat and milk; on entering Stinkum's house, I found the walls of his large sitting-room actually black with these disgusting insects. They are a cruel plague to the settlers in Southern Africa, and it often requires considerable ingenuity to eat one's dinner or drink a cup of coffee without swallowing some of them. When food is served up, two or three Hottentots or Bush-girls are always in attendance with fans made of ostrich-feathers, which they keep continually waving over the food till the repast is finished.

This morning I purchased a handsome chestnut pony of a Boer named Duprey, a field-cornet, from whom I obtained an egg of the largest species of bustard, oology being a subject in which for many years of my life I had taken great interest, having in my possession one of the finest collections in Great Britain, which I had made with much toil and danger. I have descended most of the loftiest precipices in the central Highlands of Scotland, and along the sea-shore, with a rope round my waist, in quest of the eggs of the various eagles and falcons which have their eyries in those almost inaccessible situations. Amongst Stinkum's stud was a handsome brown gelding to which I took a great fancy; after consulting for

some time with his wife, he made up his mind to part with him, and the lowest price was to be 18*l*. After a good deal of bargaining, however, I persuaded him to part with him for 12*l*. in cash, 15 lb. of coffee, and 20 lb. of gunpowder. I christened this horse "Sunday," in honour of the day on which I obtained him. This bargain being concluded, I inspanned and trekked to the wandering Boer, whom I reached about an hour after sundown.

This man's name was Gous; he lived in a small canvas tent pitched between his two waggons, round which his vast flocks of sheep assembled every evening, his cattle and horses running day and night over a neighbouring range of grassy hills: his wife was one of the best-looking women I met among the Boers; she informed me that she was of French extraction. On the following morning I breakfasted with Gous in his tent; he had lots of flesh, milk, and wild honey, which last article was reported abundant that season. He offered to sell me a brown horse of good appearance; his price was too high, but at a subsequent period we came to terms, and I bought him. After breakfast I inspanned, and having proceeded a few miles across a burning plain, on which I counted fourteen tall ostriches stalking amid large herds of other game, I reached a periodical stream, where I outspanned, the sun being intensely powerful. Here I found another Boer, named Sweirs, encamped with his flocks and herds, having been obliged to leave his farms, situated far in the depths of the Karroo, by the want of water. Sweirs was an elderly man, but had been a keen sportsman, and entertained me with many interesting anecdotes relative to the habits of the game and of his hunting adventures in his early days. He informed me that he remembered lions extremely abundant in those districts, and that a few were still to be met with. He related to me instances where he had seen the gemsbok beat off the lion, and he had also come upon the carcasses of both rotting on the plain, the body of the lion being transfixed by the long sharp horns of the powerful gemsbok so that he could not extract them, and thus both had perished together: he also mentioned that, notwithstanding the agility of the

springbok, he had often known the lion dash to the ground two, three, and four of a troop in quick succession.

Four of my oxen being footsore and unable to move, I left them in charge of old Sweirs, and in the cool of the evening inspanned; having proceeded about five miles through an extremely wild and desolate-looking country, on clearing a neck in a range of low rocky hills, I came full in view of the vley or pool of water beside which I had been directed to encamp. The breadth of this vley was about three hundred yards. One side of it was grassy, and patronized by several flocks of Egyptian wild geese, a species of barnacle, wild ducks, egrets, and cranes; the other side was bare; here the game drank, and the margin of the water was trampled by the feet of wild animals like an English horsepond. There being no trees beside which to form our camp, we drew up the waggons among some low bushes, about four hundred yards from the vley. When the sun went down I selected the three horses which were to carry me and two after-riders in the chace of the unicorn on the following morning, and directed my boys to give them a liberal supply of forage for the night. The oryx, or gemsbok, to which I was now about to direct my attention more particularly, is about the most beautiful and remarkable of all the antelope tribe; it is the animal which is supposed to have given rise to the fable of the unicorn, from its long straight horns, when seen, *en profile*, so exactly covering one another as to give it the appearance of having but one. It possesses the erect mane, long sweeping black tail, and general appearance of the horse, with the head and hoofs of an antelope. It is robust in its form, squarely and compactly built, and very noble in its bearing; its height is about that of an ass, and in colour it slightly resembles that animal. The beautiful black bands which eccentrically adorn its head, giving it the appearance of wearing a stall-collar, together with the manner in which the rump and thighs are painted, impart to it a character peculiar to itself. The adult male measures 3 feet 10 inches in height at the shoulder.

The gemsbok was destined by nature to enliven the parched

karroos and arid deserts of South Africa, for which description of country it is admirably adapted. It thrives and attains high condition in barren regions where it might be imagined that a locust would not find subsistence, and, burning as is the climate, it is perfectly independent of water, which, from my own observation, and the repeated reports both of the Boers and aborigines, I am convinced it never by any chance tastes. Its flesh is deservedly esteemed, and ranks next to the eland. At certain seasons of the year the gemsbok carries a great quantity of fat, at which time it can be more easily ridden into. Owing to the even nature of the ground which the oryx frequents, its shy and suspicious disposition, and the extreme distances from water to which it must be followed, it is never stalked or driven to an ambush like other antelopes, but is hunted on horseback, and ridden down by a long, severe, tail-on-end chase. Of the several game animals which are hunted in this manner, and may be ridden into by a horse, the oryx is by far the swiftest and most enduring ; it is widely diffused throughout the centre and western parts of Southern Africa.

On the 10th of December, everything having been made ready overnight, I saddled up, and started an hour before day-dawn, accompanied by Cobus and Jacob as after-riders leading a spare horse with my packsaddle. We held a south-westerly course, and at length reached the base of a little hillock slightly elevated above the surrounding scenery ; here I dismounted, and having ascended to the summit examined the country all round minutely with my spy-glass, but could not see anything like an oryx. I was in the act of putting up my glass again, when to my intense delight I perceived, feeding within four hundred yards, in a hollow between two hillocks, a glorious herd of about five-and-twenty of the long-wished-for gemsbok, with a fine old bull feeding at a little distance by himself, their long sharp horns glancing in the morning sun like the cheese-toasters of a troop of dragoons. I scarcely allowed myself a moment to feast my eyes on the thrilling sight before me, when I returned to my boys and with them concerted a plan to circumvent the herd. At this time *I was very much* in the dark as to the speed of the



gemsbok, having been led by a friend to believe that a person even of my weight, fourteen stone, if tolerably mounted, could invariably, after a long chase, ride right into them. This, however, is not the case; my friend was deceived in the opinion which he had formed. The fact of the matter was, that he had been a long way to windward of a party who were hunting on the same plain, and several of the gemsboks which he had killed had previously been severely chased by the other party. In the whole course of my adventures with gemsbok I only remember four occasions, when mounted on the pick of my stud (which I nearly sacrificed in the attempt), that alone and unassisted I succeeded in riding the oryx to a stand-still. The plan which I adopted, and which is generally used by the Boers, was to mount my light Hottentots or Bushmen on horses of great endurance, and thus, as it were, convert them into greyhounds, with which I coursed the gemsbok as we do stags in Scotland with our rough deer-hounds. A "tail-on-end" chase is sometimes saved, in parts where the sportsman, from a previous knowledge of the country, knows the course which the gemsbok will take; when, having first discovered the herd, the after-rider is directed to remain quiet until the hunter shall have proceeded by a wide semicircular course some miles to windward of the animals, which being accomplished, the Hottentot gives the troop a tremendous burst towards his master, who, by riding hard for their line, generally manages to get within easy shot as the panting herd strains past him.

We had agreed that Jacob and I should endeavour to ride by a circuitous course a long way to windward of the herd, and that Cobus should then give chase and drive them towards us: the wind was westerly, but the district to which this herd seemed to belong unfortunately lay to the northward. Jacob and I rode steadily on, occasionally looking behind us, and, presently taking up a commanding position, strained our eyes in the direction of the gemsboks, in the full expectation of seeing them flying towards us. After waiting a considerable time and nothing appearing, I felt convinced that we were ~~wrong~~, and in this conjecture I judged well. A slight inequality in the plain had concealed from our view the retreat

ing herd, which had started on a northerly course. Cobus had long since dashed into them, and was at that moment flying across the country, I knew not in what direction, while I, after galloping athwart the boundless plains in a state bordering on distraction, gave it up, and, accompanied by Jacob, returned to the waggons in anything but a placid frame of mind.

About two hours after, Cobus reached the waggon, having ridden the bull to a stand-still. The old fellow had lain down repeatedly towards the end of the chace, and at length could proceed no farther, when Cobus, after waiting some time and seeing no signs of his master, reluctantly left him. In the height of the day the sun was intensely powerful. I felt much disgusted at this want of luck in my first attempt, and, burning with anxiety for another trial, resolved to take the field again in the afternoon, more especially as we had not a pound of flesh in camp. Between three and four P.M. I again sallied forth with the same after-riders leading a spare horse. We cantered across plains to the north-east, and soon fell in with ostriches and quaggas, and after riding a few miles through rather bushy ground a large herd of hartebeest cantered across our path, and these were presently joined by two or three herds of quaggas and wildebeests, which kept retreating as we advanced, their course being marked by clouds of red dust: at length I perceived a herd of ash-coloured bucks stealing right away ahead of the other game, and, as I at once knew them to be gemsbok, I gave chase at a hard canter. I gradually gained upon them, and, after riding hard for about two miles, ordered Cobus to go ahead and endeavour to close with them. At this moment we had reached the border of a slight depression on the plain, down which the herd led, affording me a perfect view of the exciting scene. The gemsbok now increased their pace, but Cobus's horse, which was a good one with a very light weight, neared them at every stride, and, before they had reached the opposite side of the plain, he was in the middle of the foaming herd, and had singled out a beautiful cow with a pair of uncommonly long horns. In one minute he dexterously turned *her in my direction*, and, heading her, I obtained a fine

chance, and rolled her over with two bullets in her shoulder. My thirst was intense, and, the gemsbok having a fine breast of milk, I milked her into my mouth, and obtained a drink of the sweetest beverage I ever tasted.

While I was thus engaged, Cobus was shifting his saddle from the Immense Brute to the grey, and, this being done, I ordered him to renew the chase, and try to ride down the old bull for me. We fastened the Immense Brute to a bush beside the dead gemsbok, and then, mounting the horse which Jacob had been riding, I followed on as best I might. On gaining the first ridge, I perceived the troop of oryx about two miles ahead of me ascending another ridge at the extremity of the plain, and Cobus riding hard for them about a mile astern, but rapidly gaining on them; oryx and boy soon disappeared over the distant ridge, the boy still far behind. The country here changed from grass and bushes to extreme sterility, the whole being undermined with the holes of colonies of meercat or mouse-hunts. This burrowed ground, which is common throughout these parts, was extremely distressing to our horses, the soil giving way at every step, and my steed soon began to flag. On gaining the distant ridge a wide plain lay before me. I looked in every direction, straining my eyes to catch a glimpse of Cobus and the oryx, but they were nowhere to be seen; at length, after riding about two miles farther in the direction which he seemed to hold when I had last viewed him, I detected his white shirt on a ridge a long way to my right, and on coming up to him found he had ridden the bull to a stand-still, and that the animal was actually lying panting beside a green bush. I thought him one of the most lovely creatures I had ever beheld, and could have gazed for hours at him, but I was now many miles from my waggons, without a chance of water and dying of thirst, so I speedily finished the poor oryx, and having carefully cut off the head commenced skinning him.

It was now late—too late to take home the cow oryx that night, and as for the bull, it was much too far from my camp to think of saving any part of the flesh. I therefore sent off Cobus to the waggons to fetch water and bread, desiring him to meet me at the spot where the cow gemsbok was lying,

where I resolved to sleep, to protect her from hyænas and jackals; but before Jacob and I had accomplished the skinning, and secured the skin and the head upon the horse, night had set in. My thirst was now fearful, and I would have given anything I possessed for a bottle of water. In the hope of meeting Cobus, Jacob and I rode slowly forward, and endeavoured to find out the place; but darkness coming on, and there being no feature in the desert to guide me, I lost my way entirely; after wandering for several hours in the dark, and firing blank shots at intervals, we lay down in the open plain to sleep till morning, having tied our horses to a thorny bush beside where we lay. I felt very cold all night, but my thirst continued raging; my clothes consisted of a shirt and a pair of knee-breeches; and my bed was the bull's hide laid over a thorny bush, which imparted to my tough mattress the elasticity of a feather-bed. Having slept about two hours, I awoke and found that our horses had absconded, after which I slept little; at day-dawn I rose, and on looking about neither Jacob nor I had the most remote idea where we were, nor of the position of our waggons.

Within a few hundred yards of us was a small hill, which we ascended and looked about, but could not in the least recognise the ground. I however ascertained the points of the compass and the position of my camp by placing my left hand towards the rising sun. I was returning to the spot where I had slept, when I suddenly perceived, standing within three hundred yards of me, the horse which I had fastened beside the cow oryx on the preceding evening, and on going up found both all right. I immediately saddled the horse, and rode hard for camp, ordering Jacob to commence skinning the cow, and promising to send him water and bread as soon as I reached the waggons.

On my way thither I met Cobus on horseback, bearing bread and a bottle of water, wandering he knew not whither, having entirely lost his reckoning; my thirst had by this time departed, so I did not touch the water, but allowed him to take it on to Jacob. He informed me that John Stofolus was coming on with the baggage-waggon, to take up the *vension*; and before riding far I fell in with him, having,

with a Hottentot's usual good sense, come away without water in the casks. Having shown him how to steer, I rode on to camp, which I was right glad to reach, and felt much refreshed with a good bowl of tea. I was actively employed during the rest of this day in preserving the two oryx-heads for my collection. In the evening, a horseman on a jaded steed was seen approaching the waggons, accompanied by an after-rider leading a spare horse; this was my friend Paterson, who had succeeded in obtaining a fortnight's leave of absence, and with whom that evening, over a gemsbok stew, I "fought my battles o'er again." Our respective studs being considerably done up and in need of rest, the following day was devoted to "dulce otium," washing our rifles, and writing up the log.

On the 14th we went out on foot after a troop of ostriches, one of which we wounded, and came home much exhausted; the very ground was as hot as the side of a stove. The following day we were visited by a party of Boers from the neighbouring encampments, who had come to see how we were getting on; finding our brandy good, they made themselves very agreeable, and sat for many hours conversing with us. The leading subject of conversation was gemsbok and lion shooting, and the slaying and capturing of whole tribes of marauding Bushmen in bygone days. The Boers informed us that, when they first occupied these districts, the game was far more abundant, and eland and koodoos plentiful, and that their herds of cattle were constantly attacked and plundered by the vindictive wild Bushmen. Unlike the Kaffir tribes, who lift cattle for the purpose of preserving them and breeding from them, the sole object of the Bushmen is to drive them to their secluded habitations in the desert, where they massacre them indiscriminately, and continue feasting and gorging themselves until the flesh becomes putrid. When a Kaffir has lifted cattle, and finds himself so hotly pursued by the owners that he cannot escape with his booty, he betakes himself to flight, and leaves the cattle unscathed; but the spiteful Bushmen have a most provoking and cruel system of horribly mutilating the poor animals when they find that they are likely to fall into the hands of their rightful owners, by

discharging their poisoned arrows at them, hamstringing them, and cutting lumps of flesh off their living carcasses. At this the proprietors are so incensed, that they never show the Bushmen any quarter, but shoot them down right and left, sparing only the children, whom they tame and convert into servants. The people who suffer from these depredations are Boers, Griquas, and Bechuanas, all of whom are possessed of large herds of cattle; the massacres of the Bushmen, arising from these raids, are endless. The Boers informed us that, in a country to the south-west of the colony, a tribe of these natives were for many years in the habit of practising this art with impunity upon the herds of the farmers in the Raw-feldt, in which they were much facilitated by the vast and impracticable desert that intervened between their country and the more fertile pastoral districts. They seemed to prefer extremely dry seasons for these incursions, their object in this being that their pursuers, who of course followed on horseback while they were always on foot, should not obtain water for the horses; their own wants in this respect they provided for in the following curious manner. They had regular stages at long intervals in a direct line across the desert, where, assisted by their wives, they concealed water in ostrich-eggs, which they brought from amazing distances; and these spots, being marked by some slight inequality in the ground, they could discover either by day or night, from their perfect knowledge of the country. They were thus enabled fearlessly to drive off a herd of cattle, whose sufferings from thirst gave them little concern, and to travel day and night, while their mounted pursuers, requiring light to hold the spoor, could necessarily only follow by day, and were soon obliged to give up the pursuit on account of their horses being without water.

## CHAPTER VI.

## HUNTING IN THE DESERT.

AT an early hour on the morning of the 16th, Paterson and I again took the field, accompanied by our three 'after-riders, and, having ridden several miles in a northerly direction, we started an oryx, to which Paterson and his after-rider gave immediate chace. I then rode in an easterly direction, and shortly fell in with a fine old cow oryx, which we instantly charged. She stole away at a killing pace, her black tail streaming in the wind, and her long, sharp horns laid well back over her shoulders; aware of her danger, and anxious to gain the desert, she put forth her utmost speed, and, straining across the bushy plain, gave us a tearing chace of upwards of five miles in a northerly course, Cobus sticking well into her, and I falling far behind. After a sharp burst of about three miles, Cobus and the grey disappeared over a ridge about half a mile ahead of me. Here I mounted a fresh horse, which had been led by Jacob, and, on gaining the ridge, perceived the grey disappearing over another a fearfully long way ahead. When I reached this point I commanded an extremely extensive prospect, but no living object was visible on the wide plain. Whilst deliberating in what direction to ride, I suddenly heard a pistol-shot some distance to my left, which I knew to be Cobus's signal that the oryx was at bay; and having ridden half a mile, I discovered my servant dismounted in a hollow, but no oryx in view; he had succeeded in riding the quarry to a stand, but, I not immediately appearing, he very injudiciously had at once lost sight of the buck and left it. Having upbraided him in no measured terms for his stupidity, I sought to retrieve the fortunes of the day by riding in the direction in which he had left the oryx; the ground here was uneven and interspersed with low hillocks.

We extended our front and rode on up wind, and, having crossed two or three ridges, I discovered a troop of bucks a long way ahead, which turned out to be hartebeests. At this moment I perceived three magnificent oryx a short distance on my left. Observing us, they cantered along the ridge towards a fourth oryx, which I at once saw was "embossed with foam and dark with soil," and, knowing her to be the antelope I was in search of, we once more charged her. Our horses had now considerably recovered their wind, but the poor oryx was much distressed; and after a chase of half a mile I jumped off my horse and sent a bullet through her ribs, which brought her up, when I finished her with the other barrel. She proved a fine old cow with very handsome horns; the spot on which she fell being so sterile that we could not even obtain the smallest bushes with which to conceal her from the vultures, we covered her with my after-rider's saddle-cloth; the head, on which I placed great value, we cut off and bore along with us.

On my way home I came across Paterson's after-rider, jaging a troop of seven gemsbok, but fearfully to leeward, his illustrious master being nowhere in sight. An hour after I reached the camp Paterson came in, in a towering rage, having had an unlucky day. I despatched one of my waggons to bring home the oryx, and it returned about twelve o'clock that night, carrying the skin of my gemsbok and also a magnificent old blue wildebeest (the brindled gnoo), which the Hottentots had obtained in an extraordinary manner; he was found with one of his fore-legs caught over his horn, so that he could not run, when they hamstrung him and cut his throat; he had probably managed to get himself into this awkward attitude while fighting with some of his fellows. The vultures had consumed all the flesh of the gemsbok, and likewise torn the blanket with which I had covered her.

The following day, all our steeds being very much done up, Paterson and I visited the neighbouring Boers, to endeavour to buy and hire some horses. I bought one clipper of Mynheer Gous for 25*l.*, and called him "Grouse;" Paterson succeeded in hiring one, and with these, on the following day, *we continued our campaign against the gemsboks. My*



friend's after-rider not being well up to his work, I lent him Cobus, and on this occasion his perseverance was rewarded by a noble gemsbok, which he rode down and slew, and also a fine bull blue wildebeest, which last animal is rather rare in these parts. We had one more day together, after which, much to my regret, Paterson was obliged to depart for Colesberg, his leave of absence having expired. One of his horses being footsore, I purchased him in the hope of his soon recovering, which after a few days' rest he did: I called him "Paterson," after his old master. My stud now consisted of eight horses, but three of them were missing, and I despatched Jacob in quest of them, who returned on the third day, bringing them with him, having followed the spoor upwards of fifty miles.

In the evening two of the Hottentots walked in to camp, bending under a burden of ostrich-eggs, having discovered a nest containing five-and-thirty. Their manner of carrying them amused me. Having divested themselves of their leather "crackers," which in colonial phrase means trousers, they had secured the ankles with rheimpys, and, having thus converted them into bags, had crammed them with as many ostrich-eggs as they would contain; the remainder they left concealed in the sand, for which they returned on the following morning. While encamped at this vley we fell in with several nests of ostriches, and here I first ascertained a singular propensity peculiar to these birds. If a person discovers a nest, and does not at once remove the eggs, on returning he will probably find them all smashed; the old birds almost invariably destroy them; even when the intruder has not handled the eggs or so much as ridden within five yards of them. The nest of the ostrich is merely a hollow scooped in the sandy soil, generally amongst heath or other low bushes, and in diameter about seven feet; it is believed that two hens often lay in one nest—the hatching of the eggs is not left, as is generally believed, to the heat of the sun, but, on the contrary, the cock relieves the hen in the incubation. These eggs form a considerable item in the Bushman's cuisine, and the shells are converted into water-flasks, cups, and dishes. I have often seen Bush-girls and Bakalahari women, who

belong to the wandering Bechuana tribes of the Kalahari desert, come down to the fountains from their remote habitations, each carrying on her back a kaross or network containing from twelve to fifteen ostrich-egg shells, which had been emptied by a small aperture at one end: these they fill with water and cork up the hole with grass.

A favourite method adopted by the wild Bushman for approaching the ostrich and other varieties of game is to clothe himself in the skin of one of these birds, in which, taking advantage of the wind, he stalks about the plain, cunningly imitating the gait and motions of the ostrich until within range, when, with a well-directed poisoned arrow from his tiny bow, he can generally seal the fate of any of the ordinary varieties of game. These insignificant-looking weapons are about two feet six inches in length; they consist of a slender reed, with a sharp bone head, thoroughly poisoned with a composition of which the principal ingredients are obtained sometimes from a succulent herb, having thick leaves, which yield a poisonous milky juice, and sometimes from the jaws of snakes. The bow barely exceeds three feet in length; its string is of twisted sinews. When a Bushman finds an ostrich's nest he ensconces himself in it, and there awaits the return of the old birds, by which means he generally secures the pair. It is by means of these little arrows that the majority of the fine plumes are obtained which on state occasions grace the heads of the fair throughout the civilized world.

It was now the height of summer; in the day the heat of the sun was terrific, but there was generally a breeze of wind, and the nights were cool; our vley was daily decreasing, and I saw that, unless we were visited by rains, it would soon be no more. On the morning of the 22nd I had an adventure with a porcupine, which I killed with the thick end of my jambok, this animal, like the seal, being easily despatched with a blow on the nose.

After this we rode on, and shortly came upon an immense, compact herd of several thousand "trekking" springboks, which were exceedingly tame, and in the middle of them stood two oryx. These we managed for the first time to drive in a southerly direction, being that in which the camp lay;

and, after a sharp and rather circular burst, I bowled one of them over. She proved to be a young cow, about three years old. Having prepared her for the packsaddle with a *couteau-de-chasse*, by splitting the brisket, passing the knife along the gristly bones on one side of it, and breaking the back by a dexterous touch of the knife, where certain ribs well known to the hunter join the vertebræ, by which means the animal can more easily be balanced on the packsaddle, we succeeded with great difficulty in placing her on "Sunday," and rode slowly to the spot where we had left the porcupine. This we placed on the oryx, but had not proceeded far when it slipped, and, some of the quills running into the horse, he became perfectly frantic. The gemsbok's head also unfortunately got adrift, and, the sharp horns striking his belly at every spring, he broke loose from Jacob, and set off across the country at a terrific pace, eventually smashing the packsaddle. the only one I had in camp, and was not secured until he had been much lacerated about the haunches.

Next day Cobus and I fell in with the finest bull oryx I had yet met, which, after a severe chase, we rode into and slew. For some evenings previous a large bright comet had appeared in the south-west, having a tearing, fiery tail, which strange meteor, to the best of my recollection, shone brightly in the clear firmament for five or six weeks. We lived well, but lonely. My camp abounded with every delicacy — tongues, brains, marrow-bones, kidneys, rich soup, with the most delicious venison in the world, &c. &c., and a constant supply of ostrich-eggs. The 25th was cool and cloudy, being the first day that the sky had been overcast since I left the Thebus Flats.

In the afternoon I resolved to ride far into the oryx country, sleep under a bush, and hunt them on the following morning; I accordingly left my waggons about three p.m., with my two after-riders and a spare horse, and rode northward about fifteen miles and secured our horses to a bush, to leeward of which we slept. On my way thither, I dismounted on an arid plain to breathe our steeds and dig up some bulbs of the water-root for immediate consumption, my thirst being very severe. This invaluable root, which has doubtless saved

many a man from dying of thirst, is met with throughout the most parched plains of the Karroo. It is a large oval bulb, varying from six to ten inches in diameter, extremely juicy, and of rather an insipid flavour; it is protected by a thin brown skin, easily removed with the back of a knife. The leaves are small and narrow, with little black dots on them, not easily detected by an inexperienced eye, and the ground round it is generally so baked with the sun, that it must be dug out with a knife. The top of this bulb is discovered about eight or nine inches from the surface of the ground. A knowledge of this plant is indispensable to him whose avocations lead him into these desolate regions. Throughout the whole extent of the great Kalahari desert, and the vast tracts of country adjoining thereto, an immense variety of bulbs and roots of this juicy description succeed each other monthly; there is, therefore, hardly a season in the year at which the poor Bakalahari, provided with a sharp-pointed stick hardened in the fire, cannot obtain a meal, being intimately acquainted with each and all the herbs and roots which a bountiful hand has provided for his sustenance. There are also several succulent plants, having thick juicy leaves, which in like manner answer the purpose of food and drink.

Above all, a species of bitter water-melon is thickly scattered over the entire surface of the known parts of the great Kalahari desert, which often supply the place of food as well as water to the wild inhabitants of those remote regions, and it is stated by the Bakalahari that these melons are found of a finer flavour as they penetrate farther to the west. Most of these roots are much eaten by the gemsboks, which are led by instinct to root them out; the elephants, apprised of their position by their acute sense of smell, also feed upon them, and whole tracts may be seen ploughed up by the tusks of these sagacious animals, in quest of them.

On the 26th I raised my head from my saddle about one o'clock A.M., imagining the day was dawning, and, having roused my after-riders, we proceeded to saddle our horses; but I soon perceived that the bright moon, across which a bank of clouds was at that moment passing, had deceived me, and accordingly we off-saddled, and in a few minutes I was

once more asleep. Towards morning a smart shower of rain suddenly falling on my face broke in abruptly on my slumbers, when we once more arose, and, when day dawned, saddled up, and held a northerly course. We found the fresh tracks of hyænas not more than fifteen yards from our horses, and within a hundred yards of our bush discovered the spoor of an old bull gemsbok which had fed past us during the night. We had gone but a short distance when we perceived a herd of seven noble oryx within a quarter of a mile of us, and I had proceeded scarcely a mile in chace when we were joined by another fine herd of twenty-two, nearly all full-grown, and carrying superb horns. On we swept at a thrilling pace, and, after riding upwards of another mile, I pulled up to have a shot; but "Grouse" being very restless, the herd got a long way ahead before I could fire; however, I wounded one fine old cow and resumed the pursuit. Observing that the finest bull of the first herd seemed distressed, I endeavoured to cut him off from the herd, which I succeeded in doing, and, in the excitement of the moment, determined to follow him as long as my horse could go. Away and away we wildly flew—my game leading me a cruel long chace due north, tail-on-end, from my waggons, over a very heavy country entirely undermined by the endless burrows of the mouse-hunts. At length my poor steed completely knocked up, while the oryx seemed to gain fresh speed, and increase the distance between us; one chance alone remained; I pulled up, and, vaulting from my panting steed, with trembling hand and beating heart cocked my rifle and let fly my last barrel at the round stern of the retreating antelope; the ball raised the dust about fifty yards in advance of him, and I had the mortification of watching his lessening form as he retreated across the boundless waste. Faint and disappointed, and beyond measure vexed at the issue of this long chace, my lips cracking, and my tongue and throat parched with raging thirst, I threw my bridle on my arm and led my weary steed homewards, inwardly regretting that nature had not formed me of more Liliputian dimensions. I was now a fearful long way from camp; hills that in the morning were blue before me were now equally blue far far behind me;

"Grouse" could scarcely walk, nor did he ever recover that morning's work.

Upon my return I observed Jacob making for me, leading a fresh horse, of which I stood no little in need; he told me he had seen an oryx at a distance on the plain, seemingly wounded, and on overhauling her with my spyglass I saw plainly she was badly hit. Cantering up to her, she ran but a short distance, and, facing about, stood at bay. I foolishly approached her without firing, and very nearly paid dearly for my folly, for, lowering her sharp horns, she made a desperate rush towards me, and would inevitably have run me through had not her strength at this moment failed her, when she staggered forward and fell to the ground.

The following day the waters of my vley disappeared; the water for some days past had become "brack," making myself and my people very unwell.

On the 28th I had the satisfaction of beholding, for the first time, what I had often heard the Boers speak of, viz. a "trek-bokken," or grand migration of springboks. This was, I think, the most extraordinary and striking scene, as connected with beasts of the chase, I ever beheld. For about two hours before dawn I had been lying awake in my waggon, listening to the grunting of the bucks within two hundred yards of me, imagining that some large herd of springboks was feeding beside my camp; but rising when it was light, and looking about me, I beheld the ground to the northward of my camp actually covered with a dense living mass of springboks, marching slowly and steadily along; they extended from an opening in a long range of hills on the west, through which they continued pouring, like the flood of some great river, to a ridge about a mile to the north-east, over which they disappeared—the breadth of ground they covered might have been somewhere about half a mile. I stood upon the fore-chest of my waggon for nearly two hours, lost in astonishment at the novel and wonderful scene before me, and had some difficulty in convincing myself that it was a reality which I beheld, and not the wild and exaggerated picture of a hunter's dream. During this time these vast legions continued streaming through the neck in the hills in one unbroken

compact phalanx. At length I saddled up, and, riding into the middle of them with my rifle and after-riders, fired into their ranks until fourteen had fallen, when I cried "Enough." We then retraced our steps to secure from the ever-voracious vultures the venison which lay strewed along my track; having collected the springboks at different bushes, and concealed them with brushwood, we returned to camp.

A person anxious to kill many springboks might have bagged thirty or forty that morning. I never, in all my subsequent career, fell in with so dense a herd as I did this day, nor found them allow me to ride so near them. Having inspanned, we proceeded with the waggons to take up the fallen game, and held for the small periodical stream beside which the wandering Boers were encamped, that point being in my line of march for Beer Vley. Vast and surprising as was the herd of springboks which I had that morning witnessed, it was infinitely surpassed by what I saw on the march from my vley to old Sweirs's camp; for, on our clearing the low range of hills through which the springboks had been pouring, I beheld the plains, and even the hill-sides which stretched away on every side of me, thickly covered, not with herds, but with one vast mass of springboks; as far as the eye could strain the landscape was alive with them, until they softened down into a dim red mass of living creatures.

To endeavour to form any idea of the amount of antelopes which I that day beheld were vain; but I have, nevertheless, no hesitation in stating that some hundreds of thousands were within the compass of my vision. On reaching the encampment of the Boers I outspanned, and set about cutting up and salting my venison; the Boers had likewise been out with their roers, and shot as many springboks as they could carry home. Old Sweirs acknowledged that it was a very fair "trek-bokken," but observed that it was not many when compared with what he had seen. "You this morning," he remarked, "behold only one flat covered with springboks, but I give you my word that I have ridden a long day's journey over a succession of flats covered with them as far as I could see, and as thick as sheep in a fold." I spent the following two days with the Boers. Each morning and evening we rode out

and hunted the springboks, killing as many as we could bring home. The vast armies of these animals, however, did not tarry long in that neighbourhood; having quickly consumed every green herb, they passed away to give other districts a benefit, thus leaving the Boers no alternative but to strike their tents, and remove with their flocks and herds to lands where they might find pasture.

On the morning of the 31st I left this periodical stream, called "Rhinoceros Pool," and held on for Beer Vley, which I reached in about eight hours. Our march was a very hot one, across a desolate barren country, destitute of water; but, though barren, it was not without game: I saw several herds of springboks, of from 500 to 2000 in each; also troops of gigantic ostriches, and abundance of bustard and Namaqua partridges. Beer Vley, at the southern end of which I had now encamped, is a very extensive, low-lying, level plain; its length might be somewhat about twenty miles, and its breadth averaging from one to two. Through the entire length of this grassy vley runs, in the rainy season, a deep stream of water, which meanders in a very serpentine course along the centre of the plain, and, overflowing its banks, irrigates and enriches the surrounding pastures; at that season, however, this channel was perfectly dry, and the plain was covered with rich green grass. The country surrounding Beer Vley is extremely desolate and sterile, consisting of low rocky hills and undulating sandy plains, barely covered with dwarfish scrubby shrubs and small karroo bushes.

On the morrow I removed my encampment about eight or nine miles farther down, being obliged, from the broken and uneven nature of the ground, to march in a semicircular course, holding along the outside of the vley, and drew up my waggons on the plain close to the bank of a dry channel, with a large pool of running water in my vicinity. This was the finest place that can be imagined to shoot springboks, and also to select extraordinary specimens on account of their horns, which I was anxious to do; the country, on every side, was covered with immense herds of these antelopes, and *they all* seemed to have an inclination to



come and feed close to the watercourse beside which we lay. This channel being about ten feet deep, and extending throughout the entire length of the plain, I had only to study the wind, and could then walk up within easy shot of any herd, and select what buck I pleased.

Here I remained for several days enjoying brilliant sport, daily securing fine specimens of oryx, springboks, and other game, and also shot my first ostrich, a fine old cock. It was a very long shot; I gave my rifle several feet of elevation, yet nevertheless the ball struck him on the leg, breaking it below the knee, when he fell and was unable to rise. The power possessed by an ostrich in his leg can hardly be imagined; the thigh is very muscular, and resembles that of a horse more than of a bird—in the act of dying, he lashed out and caught me a severe blow on my leg, which laid me prostrate.

## CHAPTER VII.

BEER VLEY—GREAT ORANGE RIVER—STINK VONTEYN—GRIQUAS AND  
BASTARDS.

ON the 9th I considered I had sufficiently enjoyed the sweets of Beer Vley; and accordingly, the waggons being properly packed, I inspanned in the afternoon, and trekked south; the following morning we inspanned at dawn of day, and retraced our steps to the Rhinoceros Pool. The heat continued most oppressive, the wind still northerly. We were infested with myriads of common flies, which proved a constant annoyance, filling tent and waggons to such a degree that it was impossible to sit in them. I rode out in the morning of the 11th, accompanied by an after-rider, and shot two springboks, which we bore to camp secured on our horses behind our saddles by passing the buckles of the girths on each side through the fore and hind legs of the antelopes, having first performed an incision between the bone and the sinews with the *couteau-de-chasse*, according to colonial usage.

The Boers had informed me of a small fountain one march in advance, where they recommended me to hunt for a short time, and this place I intended should be my next encampment. On the morrow we inspanned at earliest dawn, trekked about ten miles in a north-easterly course across a barren extensive plain, steering parallel with the country frequented by the oryx, and drew up our waggons at a place where some Boers had been encamped during the winter months. Here we found a well with nothing but mud in it, so I set to work with the spade and cleaned it out, and presently had good water for myself and people. I despatched one of my Hottentots on horseback to seek for water in advance for the horses and oxen. He shortly returned, and reported another deserted Boer encampment about a mile ahead, at which there was a stronger fountain, but considerably choked with mud; having break-

fasted, I removed my waggon to it, and encamped. This fountain will be ever memorable to me in the annals of my African campaign, since on the following day I was there joined by an unique and interesting specimen of a Bushman, who afterwards faithfully followed my fortunes through every peril and hardship by sea and land, and alone stood by me when all my followers had forsaken me in the far interior.

In the afternoon I hunted and killed an old bull oryx; at night his neck was my pillow, and the jackal sang his coronach. On the 13th, nearing my encampment, I discovered two different vleys containing water, and on reaching it found a funny little fellow in the shape of the Bushboy before alluded to, awaiting my arrival. My Hottentots had detected his black woolly head protruding from the reeds adjoining the fountain, and had captured him; I presented him with a suit of new clothes and a glass of spirits, and we immediately became and continued ever after the best of friends. He informed me that, when a child, he was taken by a party of Dutch Boers at a massacre of his countrymen, and from them he had subsequently absconded on account of their cruel treatment; they had named him "Ruyter," probably after the Dutch admiral.

In the afternoon I rode to one of the vleys, accompanied by two of my men, bearing pickaxes and spades and my bedding, and dug a shooting-hole on the usual principle, about three feet deep and eight in diameter, on the lee side of the largest pool. In this hole I took my station every night—the jackals and hyænas growling round me—and waited the coming of the dawn for a sight of the game that came to drink. In this way I enjoyed excellent sport among the wildebeests and quaggas until the 17th, when, through want of water, I was compelled to march for the Great Orange River, distant upwards of thirty miles. We inspanned in the afternoon, and before midnight had with one halt trekked twenty-four miles. The country here assumed a less sterile appearance than that which I had seen during the last five weeks, being ornamented with a few ancient trees, bearing a leaf resembling that of the willow, and called by the Dutch "olean-wood;" there were also a few dwarfish thorny trees of a species of mimosa.

On the 18th we inspanned at daybreak, and after a march

of about four hours through a wild and uninhabited country suddenly found ourselves on the magnificent Orange River. This queen of African rivers, in length, I believe, somewhere about a thousand miles, forms a leading feature in the geography of Southern Africa. It rises in the east, in the Viterbergen mountain-range, a little to the northward of the latitude of Port Natal, and, flowing westward, is joined by the Vaal River about fifty miles below the spot where I had now arrived; thence it continues its course westward, and falls into the South Atlantic about five hundred miles north of the Cape of Good Hope. We made the river at a place called Davinar's Drift or ford, near which was a comfortable Dutch farm; the owner was a young Boer from the Cape district, and had obtained his present enviable position by marrying a fat old widow. Their chief riches consisted of enormous flocks of sheep and goats, which were in very fine condition, the country being suitable for pasturing these animals. Large herds of trekking springboks were feeding in sight of the homestead.

The Boers, contrary to my expectation, reported the river fordable. Before venturing, however, to cross we were occupied for upwards of an hour in raising the goods liable to be damaged by water, by means of green willow boughs, laid on the bottom of the waggons, and replacing the cargo. The descent to the river was very steep, and we found it necessary to secure, by means of the drag-chains, both hind wheels of each waggon; the drift was extremely rough, and jolted them about sadly, but we got safely through, and, having proceeded about half a mile up the opposite bank, encamped. No person who has not contemplated a magnificent river under similar circumstances can form an idea of the pleasure I felt in reaching this oasis of the desert. For many weeks past our lot had been cast in the arid plains of the parched karroo, where there had often been barely sufficient water for our cattle to drink, with cloudless skies and an intense burning sun over our heads, and no tree nor bush of any description whose friendly shade might shelter us from the power of its rays. Here, "o' the sudden," a majestic river rolled before our delighted eyes, whose fertile banks were adorned with

groves clad in everlasting verdure. At the spot at which we crossed, the river reminded me of certain parts of the Spey in summer during a "spate." The breadth of the Orange River, however, is in general about three hundred yards; the banks are ornamented with a rich fringe of weeping willows, whose branches dip into the stream, and also by many other trees and bushes whose blossoms and pleasing foliage yield the most delicious balmy perfume. Numerous flocks of the feathered tribe by their beautiful plumage and melodious notes increased the charm of this lovely scene; the entomologist could likewise have found abundance of interesting objects in his department, the ground and trees swarming with curious, if not gaudy, insects. My first move after halting was to enjoy a delightful bathe; after which, having donned my best apparel, I recrossed the river on horseback to visit the happy couple just mentioned.

I found them civil and communicative, and obtained a supply of vegetables, which to me were most acceptable, having tasted nothing of that sort for many weeks. They informed me there was a saltpan about fifteen miles in a northerly direction, in the vicinity of which I might find koodoos and sassaybys, in addition to the varieties of game I had already hunted. I walked through their garden, which, besides vegetables in great variety, contained several kinds of fruit-trees, such as peaches, apricots, &c.; the branches were laden with abundance of fruit. On the forenoon of the 19th, having twice enjoyed the luxury of bathing, I saddled up, and rode north to an extensive range of rocky hills to seek for koodoos. Crossing an extensive plain which intervened, I came upon an ostrich's nest containing two eggs; the cock was sitting on the nest, and, imagining that we would pass without observing him, allowed us to ride within sixty yards before he started. I found the hills so stony and rocky that it was impossible to ride through them; they had, however, a goodly coating of rank grass of various kinds, and the hollows contained a few dwarfish bushes. Leaving my steed in charge of my after-rider, I traversed with my rifle several of these rocky ranges, but failed to find any traces of koodoos. It was the sort of country exactly suited for the raebok, to

which I have already alluded, and of these antelopes I discovered three small herds. Ascending to the summit of the highest hill in my vicinity, I commanded a grand panoramic view of the surrounding scenery; an endless succession of bold mountains, of considerable height, extended as far as I could see in a northerly and easterly direction: some of them were tabular, but others of conical and pyramidal shapes towered above their fellows, their abrupt forms standing forth in grand relief above the surrounding country—throughout all these mountain-ranges plains of considerable extent, more or less undulating, intervened.

At 1 P.M. on the following day I inspanned and trekked north to the saltpan, which we reached in the dark. The general character of the country became richer after crossing the Orange River; the plains were adorned with more luxuriant grass, and the small karroo bushes were replaced by others of fairer growth, and of a different variety. Most of these yielded a strong aromatic perfume, but more particularly when the ground had been refreshed by a shower of rain, on which occasions the African wilderness diffuses a perfume so exquisite and balmy, that no person who has not experienced its delights can form any idea of it. Our march lay through an extensive undulating country; we passed several troops of hartebeests and springboks, and saw for the first time a sassyby, a large antelope allied to the hartebeest, and of a purple colour. Mountain ranges bounded the view on every side, and I could discover by means of my spyglass that strips of forests of mimosa stretched along their bases.

The saltpan at which we had arrived was of an oval shape, and about a quarter of a mile in diameter—a low basin whose sides sloped gently down, but the middle was a dead level of fine sand. Upon this sand, throughout the greater part of the pan, lay a thick layer of good coarse salt, varying from one to four inches in depth; heavy rains fill the pan or basin with water, and, the dry season succeeding, the water disappears, and large deposits of salt are found—these pans or salt-licks are met with in several parts of South Africa. Those which mainly supply the colony with good salt are situated between *Utenage* and *Algoa Bay*; they are of considerable

extent, and yield a surprising quantity. Ostriches and almost every variety of antelope frequent these pans for the purpose of licking the brack or salt ground, to which they are very partial. The pan which we had reached was formerly visited by Boers and Griquas for the purpose of obtaining salt, but had of late years been abandoned for others which yield it of a better quality; the country around was consequently undisturbed, and, being utterly uninhabited, lonely and still as the grave.

On the morning of the 21st I left my waggons encamped beside the saltpan, and, having proceeded about half a mile in a northerly direction along a waggon-track seldom trodden, I discovered a fountain of excellent water, but very strongly impregnated with saltpetre. This fountain I afterwards learnt is called by the Boers "Gruit Vonteyn," or Powder Fountain, its waters resembling the washings of a gun-barrel; but the Griquas more elegantly call it "Stink Vonteyn." At breakfast-time I was joined by a party of these ruffianly people, who were proceeding with a dilapidated-looking waggon to hunt hartebeests and blue wildebeests in the vicinity of a small fountain to the north-east where game was reported abundant. They were accompanied by several wild-looking, naked Bushmen attendants, captured when young and domesticated, who drove their shooting-horses loose behind the waggon, which grazed as they went along. I also observed a couple of milch-cows among their loose oxen, a healthy luxury without which that race of people seldom proceed on a journey. The country occupied by the Griquas extends from Rhama, a village on the Orange River, about thirty miles to the east of my present position, to Griquastadt, their capital, a village situated about a hundred miles to the northward of the junction of the Vaal with the Orange River; they are governed by a chief, whose name is Waterboer. These men are of Hottentot origin, and in general possess the distinguishing features of that race, such as broad, flat noses, high cheek-bones, small, elephant eyes, thick lips, woolly hair, and other physical peculiarities which, in the present enlightened state of society, it were superfluous to enumerate. They are, however, so mixed up with crosses of other tribes, that every ramification of breed

between Boers, Bechuanas, Mozambiques, Corannas, Namaqua Hottentots, Bushmen, &c., may be found located within their territory. All of these intermarry. Some of them have long black hair, while the craniums of others, such as the Bushmen, are adorned with detached tufts of sickly-looking crisp wool, and the issue of such unions exhibit locks singularly varied.

Another tribe in every way similar to these Griquas inhabits an extensive and fertile country immediately to the east of their territory; these men term themselves Bastards. Their chief's name is Adam Kok, and the name of their capital Philipolis, a small village about thirty miles to the north of Colesberg. Their country is bounded on the south by the Great Orange River, and is about the most desirable district in South Africa for farming purposes, there being numerous fountains throughout its whole extent capable of being led out to irrigate the land: without this no gardens can be formed, nor wheat grown. Rich pasture is abundant; cattle and sheep thrive and breed remarkably well; goats also, an animal valuable to the South African settler, but for which only certain districts are suitable, are here very prolific. The goat in many districts is subject to a disease called by the Boers "brunt sickta," or burnt sickness, owing to the animals afflicted with it exhibiting the appearance of having been burnt; it is incurable, and, if those infected are not speedily killed or separated from the rest, the contagion spreads rapidly, when it is not uncommon for a farmer to lose his entire flock. This sad distemper also extends itself to the *feræ naturæ*. I have shot hartebeests, black wildebeests, blesboks, and springboks, with their bodies covered with this disease, and I have known seasons when the three latter animals were so generally affected by it, that the vast plains throughout which they are found were covered with hundreds of their skulls and skeletons. One of the chief recommendations of the Bastards' country is its admirable suitableness for breeding horses; large herds of these may be seen throughout their country pasturing high on the mountain sides, or scattered in troops over its grassy plains. The deadly distemper so prevalent along the frontiers of the colony is here of comparatively rare occurrence; in the far interior, however, it is so



virulent during five or six months of the year, that it is often impossible to save a single horse, and through its ravages I annually lost the greater part of my stud.

The chiefs of the Griquas and Bastards are in close alliance with the English government, which protects them from the attacks of the rebel Dutch Boers, who, well aware of the excellent qualities of the Bastards' country, are possessed with a strong desire to appropriate it; the language spoken by both these tribes is Dutch. They have in general embraced the Christian religion, and several worthy missionaries have, for several years past, devoted their lives to the improvement of their temporal and eternal condition. The dress worn by the men consists of a home-made leathern jacket, waistcoat, and trousers, feldtschoens, or home-made shoes, a Malay handkerchief tied round the head, and on Sundays and other great occasions a shirt and a neckcloth. The females wear a close-fitting corset reaching to the small of the waist, below which they sport a petticoat like the women of other countries; these petticoats are sometimes made of stuffs of British manufacture, and at others of soft leather prepared by themselves. Their head-dress consists of two handkerchiefs, one of black silk, the other of striped red and green; they are very fond of beads of every size and colour, which they hang in strings round their necks. One description of bead is peculiar to themselves and to the tribes extending along the banks of the Great Orange River to its junction with the sea; it is formed of the root of a bush found near the mouth of the Orange River, and possesses a sweet and peculiar perfume. Every Griqua girl wears at least one of these; and no traveller who has once learnt to prize this perfume can inhale it again without its inadvertently recalling to his memory the fine dark eyes and fair forms of the semi-civilised nymphs frequenting the northern bank of the Orange River.

Their houses somewhat resemble a bee-hive or ant-hill, and consist of boughs of trees stuck into the ground in a circular form, lashed down across one another overhead so as to form a framework, on which they spread large mats formed of reeds; these are also used instead of waggon-sails, and are very effectual in resisting both sun and rain—the diameter of the

qua huts varies from ten to fifteen feet. When they change their quarters in search of pasture, they have therefore little difficulty in removing their house along with them. I have seen a pack-ox carrying not only its master's house on its back, but also a complete set of dairy utensils, all manufactured of wood, a couple of skin bags containing thick k, various cooking utensils, and, surmounting all, the gudee, with one or two of her children. The Griquas are all possessed of flocks and herds of goats, sheep, and cattle. A description of the houses and manner of living of these people may serve to convey an idea of all the tribes that border on the Vaal and Orange rivers in their course to the sea. They are, without exception, of an indolent disposition, and averse to hard work of any description; much of their time is spent in hunting, and large parties annually leave their homes and proceed with their waggons, oxen, and horses on hunting expeditions into the far interior, absenting themselves for three or four months at a time. They are remarkable for their regard for truth, a weakness which I regret to state I found very prevalent in South Africa; they are also great beggars, usually commencing by soliciting "trexels," a trexel being a pound of tea or coffee. Knowing the gallantry of our nation, they pretend that they are asking it for a wife or daughter, whom they represent as being poorly; if this is granted they improve their importunities, successively fancying your hat, your koloth, or coat; and I have known them on several occasions coolly ask me to exchange my trousers for their leathern expressions, which they had probably worn for at least a couple of summers.

When this party of sorry-looking Griquas came up to me, being anxious to see as much as possible of the natives of the districts through which I traversed, I invited them to halt and drink coffee with me, an invitation which none of them was ever known to decline. They informed me that, in the mountain-ranges to the north-east, koodoo were to be met with, and invited me to accompany them on their *chasse*. When breakfast was finished they sent their waggon in advance, with instructions to wait for their arrival at the mountain, where they intended to pitch their camp; and,

having saddled up, we all set forward east to hunt koodoos and hartebeests, or any other game we might fall in with. After riding three or four miles, and approaching the base of the hills, we entered an ancient forest of mimosas, every tree a study for an artist; there was also a considerable undercover of various sweet-smelling shrubs and bushes—here steinbok and duyker were abundant. This venerable forest extended all around the bases of various ranges of rocky hills which stretched in different directions through the plains. Close in, at the foot of one of the hills, we discovered a Bushman residence, consisting of three small huts, each about four feet high, and eight in diameter, formed of boughs of trees, and thatched over with rank grass drawn up by the roots; the natives, as usual, had fled on our approach, and no living creature was to be seen. I entered each of the huts and found lots of well “braid,” or dressed skins of the wild beasts of these parts. All their dishes were made either of ostrich-eggs or of the shells of land tortoises, and these were ranged round the floor on one side of the hut; most of the ostrich-eggshells contained water.

We crossed the hills by a stony neck; and having proceeded some distance through several well-wooded glades and hollows in the table-land of the hills, came suddenly upon a noble prospect. A wide grassy plain, covered with picturesque mimosas and detached clumps of evergreen bushes, stretched away from the bases of the hills on which we stood; beyond, the landscape was shut in by the bold and abrupt forms of rugged mountain ranges, coloured with a softened blue tint; having descended into this fine picturesque plain, we held north, riding parallel with the hilly chain. Presently, my comrades adopting a course which did not strike me as the most likely to fall in with game, I chose a line of march for myself, and, following under the mountain chain, soon lost sight of them; on this occasion I had taken the field without any after-rider. Having ridden about a mile farther, I came suddenly upon a troop of koodoos; amongst them were two bucks, which carried magnificent, widely-set, long, spiral horns, and these at once made, as koodoos invariably do, for the adjacent rocky hills: their pace was a succession

of long bounds over the thorny bushes, that sadly distressed my poor steed. I nevertheless gained on them, and should assuredly have secured one, had they not reached a stony barrier of sharp, hard rocks, over which they disappeared, and where my horse could not follow. I was much struck with the noble appearance of these two buck koodoos, and felt very chagrined at having lost them.

Turning my face to the south, I rode along the skirts of the forest, when I suddenly perceived a gallant herd of nine old oryxes cantering towards me, all of them carrying horns of immense length and beauty, surpassing anything I had hitherto seen; they were preceded by four beautifully striped zebras, the first I had met with, and followed by two brilliant red hartebeests. In half a minute I was flying along within sixty yards of the troop, anxious to ascertain which had the finest horns, and deploring my folly in having taken the field without my after-riders; I nevertheless entertained hopes of success, as these antelopes had evidently been followed by the Griquas from whom I had parted; and singling out an old bull, to whose flank I stuck for several miles, I at length came to within fifteen yards of his handsome stern; his tongue was hanging from his mouth, and long wreaths of foam streamed back on his sides. Suddenly, on rounding a thorny bush, he pulled up, and, facing about, stood at bay; I sprang breathless and exhausted from my panting steed, and with a shaking hand sent a bullet through his shoulder, which terminated his career — this noble oryx carried the finest horns I had met with, and was the finest in the herd.

Having off-saddled and knee-haltered my horse, I removed the head of the oryx, which I accomplished with some trouble, the skin at the neck being an inch in thickness; and covering the carcase with the thorny branches from a neighbouring mimosa, to protect it from the vultures, I returned to camp, carrying the head on the pommel of the saddle before me, and my rifle over my shoulder.

On the following morning I discovered the skeleton of an old doe koodoo, which a pack of thirty wild dogs had run into and consumed. My Hottentots hastily took possession of the marrow of the *thigh-bones*, esteemed by them a great

delicacy, and greedily devoured their raw contents. Having ascertained from personal observation that blue wildebeests would come and drink at Stink Vonteyn, I walked to the fountain in the evening, with four of my followers, bearing spades, a pickaxe, and my bedding; and having constructed a shooting-hole, I took up my position for the night, which was mild and lovely, with good moonlight. About midnight I peeped from my hole, and saw a herd of about twenty shaggy blue wildebeests, or brindled gnoos, preceded by a patriarchal old bull, cautiously advancing to the water. I fired at him, and heard the ball tell upon his shoulder, upon which he and the whole troop galloped off in a northerly direction, enveloped in a cloud of red dust.

On the 23rd, at dawn of day, I took up the spoor of the herd, and after proceeding a short distance perceived the head of the old bull, with its strangely hooked, fair-set horns, gazing at me from the long grass some hundred yards in advance. I held as though I intended to go past him; but before I neared him he sprang to his feet, and endeavoured to make off. Poor old bull! He was very faint from loss of blood; one fore leg was broken in the shoulder, and after a tottering run of about a hundred yards, he lay down, when I walked up to within eighty yards of him and sent a bullet through his heart. He afforded us a welcome supply of excellent flesh, being in fine condition. I breakfasted on an ostrich-egg, Kleinboy having found a nest the preceding day; he had, however, unfortunately taken only eight of the eggs, foolishly leaving the other twelve, which on his return he found smashed by the old birds according to their usual custom.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## STINK VONTEYN TO THE VAAL RIVER AND BACK—WILD DOGS.

ON the evening of the 24th we inspanned, and, leaving "Stink Vonteyn," marched upon the Vaal River, distant about twenty-five miles, which we reached about two on the following morning; our road lay through soft sand, making the draught very severe for the oxen. Having sent mounted men through the stream to ascertain its depth, and finding a passage practicable, I resolved at once to cross it—a rule generally adopted by all experienced travellers in this country, among whom a general maxim prevails never to defer the passage of a river if at all fordable when they reach it. Endless are the stories related by South African travellers, who, by failing to adopt this plan, have been compelled to remain for weeks, and even months, on the banks of its various rivers. The current being very powerful, I mounted the leaders of one of my teams, and in a few minutes the long double line of oxen were stoutly stemming the rapid stream, which came half way up their sides; the water just reached the bottom of my cargoes, but did not damage anything. The bank on the farther side was extremely steep and stony, and required every ox to exert himself to the utmost. The river here is very beautiful; broad and rapid reaches are succeeded by long, deep, and tranquil pools, termed by the natives "zekoe ychots," signifying sea-cow or hippopotamus holes, for these vast and wondrous amphibious animals, not many years since, were plentiful along the entire length of the Vaal River. But the hippopotamus, like the elephant, is of a very shy and secluded disposition, and rapidly disappears before the approach of civilization. The margin of the Vaal, as well as the Orange River, is richly clad with dense groves of various evergreen trees, among which drooping willows predominate,

whose long waving fringes dip gracefully into the limpid waters as they glide along in their seaward course; the banks of both these rivers are strewn with huge trunks of trees, which have been borne thither by the mighty floods to which they are annually subject. At a short distance above my encampment on the northern side was a beautiful island, adorned with trees of the richest verdure.

About three P.M. I rode north-east to look for roan-antelopes, which, next to the eland, are the largest in the world, and, being incapable of great speed, may at times be galloped into with a good horse; I was accompanied by Cobus and Jacob. We found the country covered with bushes, the majority of which were covered with thorns on the fish-hook principle. This variety of mimosa is waggishly termed by the Boers "vyacht um bige," or wait-a-bit thorns, as they continually solicit the passing traveller not to be in a hurry, and, if he disregards the request, the probability is that he will leave a part of his shirt or trousers in their possession. Here and there were hills covered with sharp adamantine rocks, throughout which, however, there was abundance of excellent grass and fine green bushes; in short, it was just the country to suit the taste of the rock-loving koodoos, and we soon came upon an old buck, which, when seen standing broadside on, is decidedly one of the grandest-looking antelopes in the world. The ground this day was the most terrific for horses that can be imagined, but "The Cow," having in his youth led an unrestrained life, as most Cape horses do, in the rugged mountains of the Hantam, bounded along the hill side in a style worthy of a klipspringer, and after a severe run, and taking a short cut like a greyhound running cunning, I got within range, and with a single ball rolled over the finest specimen of a koodoo that I had yet shot in Africa; he was a first-rate old buck, and carried a pair of ponderous, long, wide-set, spiral horns.

Owing to the nature of the ground which the koodoos frequent, it is a very difficult matter to ride them down; they are more usually obtained by stealing upon them: when, however, the hunter discovers a heavy old buck koodoo on level ground, there is no great difficulty to ride into him, his speed

and endurance being very inferior to that of the oryx. The skin of the koodoo, though thin, is extremely tough, and much prized by the colonists for "foreslocks," or lashes for ox-waggon whips. A koodoo-skin was my mattress this night, a saddle my pillow; and supperless I lay down to rest, without any covering save an old shirt and a pair of leather crackers. The excitement of the thrilling sport I had enjoyed prevented my sleeping until a late hour; I dreamt we were surrounded by a troop of lions, and, awaking with a loud cry, startled my men and horses from their slumbers.

On the morning of the 30th I inspanned, and trekked some miles farther up the northern bank of the Vaal, encamping opposite where the Riet or Reed River joins it. The stream here, about a hundred and fifty yards in breadth, is extremely beautiful, with sloping banks richly adorned with shady evergreen groves, and fringed with lofty reeds, which are always infested with a virulent species of mosquito. This day I made a fine off-hand shot at an old cock bustard at a hundred and fifty yards, and returning to my waggon, where I expected to find my breakfast waiting me, discovered my two worthies, Jacob and Cobus, whose duty it was to prepare it, quietly reclining under the shade of a mimosa, enjoying the soothing influence of their short clay pipes. Thinking a little wholesome correction might prove beneficial, I accordingly administered it, which so disgusted these high-minded youths, that they embraced the opportunity of my bathing to abscond from my service.

The 31st was a charming cool day, the sky beautifully overcast, and, having enjoyed a good swim in the waters of the Vaal, I saddled up, and rode north to seek for roan antelope. I was accompanied by Carollus, the native of Mozambique, who was much too heavy to act as after-rider, and by my little Bushboy Ruyter, who, although he had learnt to ride among the Boers, had an indifferent seat on horseback, and would never push his horse to overtake any antelope if the ground were at all rough.

Having explored the country to a considerable distance *without any result*, I resolved to make for home, as the



darkening sky and distant thunder threatened a heavy storm, and in less than half an hour the rain descended in torrents, and the wind blew extremely cold. Peals of thunder, the loudest I think I had ever heard, now broke over us, and the forked lightning played above and around with such vividness as to pain my eyes. Shifting my saddle from "Sunday" to "The Cow," we pricked along at a smart pace, and were entering a thicket of thorny bushes, when a very large grey-looking antelope stood up under one of them. I could not see his head, but I at once knew that it was the long-sought-for roan antelope, or bastard gemsbok. Carrollus quietly handed me my little Moore rifle, which lay well secured from the pelting storm in one of Mr. Hugh Snowie's patent waterproof covers. The noble buck now bounded forth, a superb old male, carrying a pair of grand scimitar-shaped horns, and standing nearly five feet high at the shoulder. "The Cow" knew well what he had to do, and set off after him with right good will over a succession of masses of rock and stone, and dense thorny bushes. In a few minutes my legs below the knee were a mass of blood, and my shirt, my only covering, was flying in streamers from my waist. The old buck at first got a little ahead, but, the ground improving, I gained upon him, and after a sharp burst of about two miles we came to a slight acclivity, when he suddenly faced about and stood at bay, gazing on me with glowing eyes, and a look of defiance. This was to me a joyful moment; the buck I had for many years heard of and longed to meet was now within forty yards of me; dismounting, I sent a bullet through his shoulder, when he endeavoured to charge, but his strength failed him, and I then gave him a second shot in the neck, just where I always cut off the head. This was his *coup-de-grace*: he rolled over, and, stretching his limbs, closed his eyes upon the storm, which all this time had raged with increasing severity.

Feeling extremely cold, for I had lost my shirt in the chase, and all that was left me was my shoes and leather knee-breeches, I nevertheless took some time to inspect the beautiful and rare antelope which I had been fortunate enough to capture. He proved to be a first-rate specimen: his horns were

extremely rough and finely knotted. I now proceeded to cut off his head and "gralloched" him, all of which I accomplished before my followers came up. They stumbled on me by chance, having lost sight of me in the storm. Having shifted my saddle from "The Cow" to "Colesberg," I ordered them to follow, and rode hard for camp, which was distant many miles.

My meal-bag was now almost empty; and this being a dangerous country for the horse-sickness, a distemper which rages during February, March, and April, I resolved to recross the Vaal River, and bend my course for the land of blesboks, a large and beautiful violet-coloured antelope, which is found, together with black wildebeests and springboks, in countless multitudes on the vast green plains of short sour grass situated about a hundred and fifty miles to the eastward of my position. My purpose was to amuse myself hunting in these parts, and after that revisit Colesberg, where I intended to store the specimens of natural history I had already accumulated. Before removing from my present encampment I fell in with a troop of twelve young ostriches, not much larger than guinea-fowls; I was amused to see the mother endeavour to lead us away exactly like a wild duck, spreading out and drooping her wings, and throwing herself down on the ground before us as if wounded, while the cock bird cunningly led the brood away in an opposite direction.

In the afternoon of the 3rd of February we inspanned, and retraced our steps to the drift, which we reached in the dark: I crossed the river however and encamped on the opposite bank. On the following day I marched through a sandy country adorned in parts with very ancient-looking, picturesque trees of the "cameel-dorn" species to a small kraal of Griquas, where I hoped to obtain some corn, and from this village I had a distant view of both the Vaal and the Orange River. Here I purchased eight "emirs" or measures of wheat from one of the Griquas, with a couple of goats for slaughter, and subsequently returned to Stink Vonteyn. Namaqua partridges mustered in great force here. I met with three varieties; *they are abundant wherever extensive open sandy dis-*

tricts occur, and by watching their flight in the mornings and evenings I have, when forsaken by the natives, discovered the fountains in the desert. As they fly they repeatedly utter a soft melodious cry, resembling the words "pretty, pretty dear." They are excellent eating.

In the forenoon I observed the base of an extensive range of hills to the northward concealed for miles, as if by thick clouds or mist, which steadily advanced towards us, holding a southerly course; this mist proved to be a flight of myriads of locusts, in my opinion one of the most remarkable phenomena a traveller can behold. They very much resembled a fall of snow, when it gently descends in large light flakes, and the sound caused by their wings reminded me of the rustling of the summer-breeze among the trees of the forest. In the afternoon I hunted a mountain-range to the westward of the saltpan called by the Boers and Bastards "Sautpan's berg;" and in the evening visited the old Bushman's hut, whom I found at home with a litter of very small Bush-children, his grandchildren. I lay down to sleep beneath an aged mimosa in their vicinity, and about midnight the wind setting in from the Southern Ocean, and having no covering but my shirt, I felt it piercingly cold; sleep was out of the question, and I was right glad when I heard the sparrow's chirp announcing the dawn of day. Notwithstanding these nocturnal exposures, my health since leaving my regiment had been perfect—not a twitch of rheumatism (a complaint from which I suffered while in India), although I had ceased to wear flannel, which I had previously done for years: I can therefore confidently recommend the country to those who suffer from that most grievous affliction. Colds, coughs, and sore throats are of rare occurrence; and scientific persons, on whose opinions I could rely, informed me that the frontier districts of the colony, and the remoter ones to the northward, are the finest in the world for persons labouring under any pulmonary complaint. At times when I returned to camp I felt very lonely for want of some companion to welcome me, and discuss over my gipsy-fire the adventures and incidents of the day: in general, however, when the sport was good I enjoyed excellent spirits.

On reaching my waggons we inspanned and trekked east, making for a small fountain situated on the borders of a large *sa*, which lay in a broad hollow. Here the entire country was of a soft sandy character, and utterly uninhabited; the *lains* covered with long rough heath and other low scrubby bushes, intermingled with much sweet grass. Ranges of hills of goodly height and considerable extent intersected the *lains*, and bounded the view at various distances on every side; ancient forests of picturesque and venerable *mimosas*, interspersed with high grey-leaved bushes, detached and in groups, stretched along the bases of these mountain-ranges, their breadth extending about a mile into the surrounding country. We reached the small fountain in the dark, our road leading through the saltpan, where we halted for an hour to collect salt, and had little difficulty in filling two large sacks.

This day a flight of locusts passed over our heads during the space of half an hour, flying so thick as to darken the sun, maintaining an elevation of from six to three or four hundred feet above the level of the plain. Woe to the vegetation of the country on which they alight! In the afternoon two mounted Boers, one of them the brother of the master from whom my little Bushboy had absconded, rode up and requested me to give him back, when, after listening to their importunities and false statements till I was tired, I informed them that the nation to which I belonged was averse to slavery, and that I could not think of acceding to their demand. They then saddled up and departed, telling me the matter should not rest there. The little Bushman seemed highly amused with the whole proceeding; and when the Boers mounted their steeds and rode away, he shrieked with delight, exclaiming in Low Dutch, "Yah, yilla forfluxta Boera, illa had de chadachta me te chra, mar ik heb noo a ghroote *me*, dat sall yilla neuk;" signifying "Yes, you worthless *oere*, you thought to get hold of me; but I have now a great master who will serve you out." My oxen and horses having effaced all original traces around the fountain, I described a circle a little distance from it, to ascertain if it was much frequented. This is the manner in which spoor should

at all times be sought for; and finding abundant traces of various wild animals, I resolved to remain here some days. Concealing my waggons from view in an adjacent hollow, I constructed a shooting-hole beside the fountain, where for several mornings, at early dawn, I shot *hartebeests* as they came to drink.

On the 12th I rode north-east, and after proceeding several miles through an open country, entered a beautiful forest of *cameeldorn*-trees, skirting a range of steep rocky hills. The country gave me the idea of extreme antiquity, where the hand of man had wrought no change since the Creation. In a finely-wooded broad valley we fell in with a magnificent herd of blue *wildebeests*, and as they cantered across the grassy sward, tossing their fierce-looking, ponderous heads, their shaggy manes and long, black, bushy tails streaming in the breeze, they presented an appearance at once striking and imposing; to a stranger they conveyed rather the idea of buffaloes than anything belonging to the antelope-tribe, to which, indeed, *wildebeests*, both blue and white, are but remotely allied, notwithstanding the classification of naturalists. Returning to camp with the trophies of a *hartebeest*, I started a strand wolfe, or fuscous *hyæna*, which I rode into and slew.

About midnight on the 16th I went to my shooting-hole beside the fountain, and at dawn, hearing some animal approach, I peeped through the stones that surrounded my hole, and saw a fine bull brindled *gnoo* dash into the water within forty yards of me; he stood at bay, and was followed by four wild dogs, their heads and shoulders covered with blood, and savage in the extreme. They seemed quite confident of success, and came leisurely up to the bull, passing within a few yards of me, their eyes glistening with ferocious glee.

My anxiety to possess this fine old bull, and also a specimen of the wild dog, prevented my waiting to see more, and deliberating but for a few seconds, I shot the *gnoo* and the largest dog. The bull, on receiving the ball, bounded out of the fountain; but, suddenly wheeling about, re-entered it, and, staggering violently for a moment, sunk beneath its waters. The hound got the bullet through his heart, and springing forward from his comrades, instantly measured his length

upon the gravel. I then quickly reloaded my rifle, lying on my side—a proceeding which, I may inform those who have not yet tried it, is rather difficult to accomplish. Whilst I was thus occupied, the three remaining hounds reluctantly withdrew, and described a semicircle to leeward for the purpose of obtaining my wind and more correctly ascertaining the cause of their discomfiture, when I reopened my fire, and wounded another, after which they all made off.

I could not help feeling very reluctant to fire at the jolly hounds. The whole affair reminded me so very forcibly of many gallant courses I had enjoyed in the Scottish deer-forests with my own noble deer-hounds, that I could not divest myself of the idea that those now before me deserved a better recompense for the masterly manner in which they were pursuing their desperate game. One hound in particular bore a strong expression of dear old Factor in his face, a trusty stag-hound bred by myself, whose deeds, though not renowned in verse like Ossian's Oscar and Luath, were perhaps little inferior either in speed or prowess to those famed in ancient song. The wild dogs, or "wilde honden," as they are termed by the Dutch Boers, are still numerous, both in the colony and the interior. They hunt together in large organized packs of from ten to sixty, and by their extraordinary powers of endurance, and mode of mutual assistance, are enabled to run into the swiftest, or overcome the largest and most powerful antelope. I have never heard of their attacking the buffalo, and I believe that the animal pursued in the present instance is the largest to which they give battle. Their pace is a long, never-tiring gallop, and in the chase they relieve one another, the leading hounds falling to the rear when fatigued, when others, who have been husbanding their strength, come up and relieve them; having succeeded in bringing their quarry to bay, they all surround him, and he is immediately dragged to the ground, and in a few minutes torn to pieces and consumed. They are of a bold and daring disposition, and do not entertain much fear of man, evincing less concern on his approach than any other carnivorous animal with which I am acquainted. When a pack is

disturbed they trot leisurely along before the intruder, repeatedly halting and looking back at him. The females bring forth their young in large holes, in desolate open plains, and these burrows are connected with one another underground. When a troop of wild dogs observe a man approaching, they do not, as might be supposed, take shelter in the holes, but, trusting to their speed, rush forth, even though the intruder should be close upon them, and retreat across the plain, the young ones, unless very weak, accompanying them. The devastation occasioned by these dogs among the flocks of the Dutch Boers is inconceivable. It often happens that when the careless shepherds have left their charge, in quest of honey, or for some other object, a pack of these marauders come across the defenceless flock; a sanguinary massacre in such cases invariably ensues, and incredible numbers of sheep are killed and wounded. The voracious dogs, not contented with killing as many as they can eat, follow resolutely on, tearing and mangling all that come within their reach. Their voice consists of three different kinds of cry, each being used on a special occasion: one is a sharp angry bark, usually uttered when they suddenly behold an object which they cannot make out. Another resembles the chattering of monkeys; this cry is emitted at night when large numbers of them are congregated together, and they are excited by any particular occurrence, such as being barked at by domestic dogs. The third, and the one most commonly made, is a sort of rallying note to bring the various members of the pack together when they have been scattered in following several individuals of a troop of antelopes. It is a peculiarly soft melodious cry, yet nevertheless may be distinguished at a great distance; it very much resembles the second note uttered by the cuckoo, and, when heard in a calm morning echoing through the distant woodlands, it has a very pleasing effect. They treat all domestic dogs, however large and fierce, with the utmost scorn, waiting to receive their attack, and then clanishly assisting one another, they generally rend them in pieces. The domestic dogs, most cordially reciprocating their animosity, abhor their very voices, at what distance soever heard, even more than

that of the lion, starting to their feet, and angrily barking for hours. This interesting though destructive animal seems to form the connecting link between the wolf and the hyæna.

Having summoned my men, and with considerable difficulty dragged the ponderous carcase of the old bull out of the water, we found that he had been cruelly lacerated, and it appeared to me they had endeavoured to hamstring him. His hind legs, haunches, and belly were dreadfully torn; he had lost half his tail, and was otherwise mutilated. I could not help commiserating his fate. It is melancholy to reflect that, in accordance with the laws of nature, such scenes of pain must ever be occurring; one species, whether inhabiting earth, air, or ocean, being produced to become the prey of another. At night I watched the water, with fairish moonlight, and shot a large spotted hyæna.

I continued here hunting hartebeests until the 21st. I inspanned at an early hour and trekked due east till sundown, and then halted near a small fountain of fine water, having performed a march of about twenty-five miles.



## CHAPTER IX.

RIET RIVER—MIRAGE—BLESBOK—CURIOUS FACTS CONCERNING LIONS.

WE inspanned before dawn on the 23rd of February, and after steering east and by north for twelve miles, found our selves on the southern bank of the Riet River, the breadth of which is here about thirty yards: it rises one hundred miles to the eastward, and, flowing westerly, joins the Vaal River opposite Campbell's Dorp.

On the third day after making the Riet River we crossed below a very picturesque waterfall, and resumed our march along its northern bank. The day was cool and pleasant, the sky overcast; the hot days of summer were now past, and the weather was most enjoyable. Continuing my march in the afternoon, I left the Riet River on my right, and held on through an open sandy country richly covered with abundance of sweet grass, and intersected by mountain ranges of very considerable extent. At sunset I encamped at a Boer's farm, who received me hospitably, and during dinner, according to custom, pestered me with a thousand questions, such as, What was my nation? Where was I from? Where was I bound for? Why I travelled about alone in such a manner? Where was my farm? Were my father and mother living? How many brothers and sisters had I? Was I married? And had I never been married in the whole course of my life? On my replying in the negative to this last question, the Boer seemed petrified with astonishment, and the family gazed at one another in utter amazement. On the following day I made two long marches, and again halted on the farm of a Boer, whose name was Potcheter. I found this man particularly bitter against the Government, and on my going up to him to inquire where I should outspan, he was very surly, remarking to three other gruff-

looking Boers, as I walked away, that I was "a verdomd Englishman."

Notwithstanding this cold reception I outspanned, and on returning to the house soon managed to get into their good graces. During dinner the conversation turned on the present administration of the government; and this being a disagreeable subject, I produced my 'Museum of Animated Nature,' a work which never failed to enchant the Boers, and put an end to all political discussions; shooting and wild animals engrossing the conversation during the rest of the evening. My entertainer informed me I should see herds of blesboks on the following day, and that a considerable party of Boers had mustered upon a farm a few miles in advance, to hunt a troop of lions which had killed some horses on the preceding one. I also learnt that a war was brewing between the emigrant Boers on the northern bank of the Orange River and the Bastard and Griqua tribes; this rumour threw my followers into a state of great alarm, but I resolved that my movements should not be influenced by these reports.

Before leaving I heard that the party who had been lion-hunting had bagged two fine lions, a male and female; and as their farm lay in my line of march, I mounted Colesberg, and, desiring my servants to follow with the waggons, rode forward to inspect the noble game. I found the lion and lioness laid out on the grass in front of the house, and the Boers' Hottentots busy skinning them. Both lions were riddled with balls, and their heads shot all to pieces. This is generally the way in which the Boers serve a lion after they have killed him, fearing to approach, until they have expended a further supply of ammunition. A Hottentot is then ordered to throw a stone at him, after which the Boers ask if he is dead, and on the Hottentot replying, "Like so, baas," he is ordered to pull him by the tail before the hunters will venture to go up to him.

The Boer to whom this farm belonged was a tall, powerful, manly-looking fellow, and informed me he was a Dane. He was in great distress about two favourite dogs the lions had killed during the attack; three more were badly wounded.

Being anxious to commence my operations against the blesboks, I resumed my march shortly after mid-day. On taking leave, the Dane presented me with some meal and a couple of loaves of bread, a luxury to which I had been an utter stranger for many months, and which, together with vegetables, I may further add, I hardly ever tasted during the five hunting expeditions I performed in South Africa. Another short march in a north-easterly direction brought me to the western borders of the boundless regions inhabited by the blesboks; here I drew up my waggons beside a vley of rain-water, in open country, the plains before me being adorned with herds of black wildebeest, springbok, and blesbok.

I had now reached a country differing entirely from any I had hitherto seen. The sweet grass, heretofore so abundant, became very scarce, being succeeded by short, crisp, sour pasturage, which my cattle and horses refused to eat. A supply of forage, however, could generally be obtained by driving them to the stony hillocks and rocky mountain ranges intersecting the campaign country. The plains, which were firm and hard, and admirably suited for riding, were pastured short and bare by the endless herds of game which from time immemorial had held possession of them, and often extended to amazing distances, without any landmark to break the monotony of their boundless and ocean-like expanse. At other times the eye was relieved by one or more abrupt pyramidal or cone-shaped hills, which serve to guide the hunter to his encampment after the excitement of the chase.

When the sun is powerful, which it is during the greater part of the year, an enduring mirage dances on the plain wherever the hunter turns his bewildered eyes. This mirage restricts the range of vision to a very moderate distance, and is very prejudicial to correct rifle-shooting. The effect produced by this optical illusion is remarkable: hills and herds of game often appear as if suspended in mid-air. Dry and sun-baked vleys, or pans covered with a crystallized efflorescence, constantly delude the thirsty traveller with the prospect of water; and more than once I have ridden towards a couple of springboks, magnified a hundred-fold, which I had

mistaken for the white tilts of my waggons. This vast tract of bare, sour pasturage, which is peculiarly the inheritance of the black wildebeest, the springbok, and the blesbok, but more particularly of the latter, occupies a central position, as it were, in Southern Africa. On the west of my present encampment, as far as the shores of the South Atlantic Ocean, no blesboks are to be found; neither do they extend to the northward of the latitude of the river Molopo, in  $25^{\circ} 30'$ , of which I shall at a future period make mention, although herds frequent the plains along its southern bank. To the south a few are still to be found within the colony, but their head-quarters are to the northward of the Orange River; whence they extend in an easterly direction throughout all the vast plains situated to the west of the Witbergen range.

The blesbok, in his manners and habits, very much resembles the springbok, which, however, it greatly exceeds in size, being as large as an English fallow-deer. It is one of the true antelopes, and all its movements and paces partake of the grace and elegance peculiar to that species. Its colour is similar to that of the sassayby, its skin being beautifully painted with every shade of purple, violet, and brown. The belly is of the purest white, and a broad white band, or "blaze," adorns the entire length of its face. Blesboks differ from springboks in the determined and invariable way in which they scour the plains, right in the wind's eye, and also in the manner in which they carry their noses close to the ground. Throughout the greater part of the year they are very wary and difficult of approach, but more especially when the does have young ones; at that season, when a herd is disturbed, and takes away up the wind, every other herd in view follows it, and the alarm extending for miles and miles down the wind, to endless herds beyond the vision of the hunter, a continued stream of blesboks may often be seen scouring up wind for upwards of an hour, and covering the landscape as far as the eye can see. The springboks, which in equal numbers frequent the same ground, do not in general adopt the same decided course as the blesboks, but take away in every direction across the plains, sometimes with flying

bounds, beautifully exhibiting the long snowy-white hair with which their backs are covered, and at others walking slowly and carelessly out of the hunter's way, scarcely deigning to look at him, with an air of perfect independence, as if aware of their own matchless speed.

The black wildebeests, which also thickly cover the entire length and breadth of the blesbok country, in herds averaging from twenty to fifty, have no regular course, like the blesboks. Unless driven by a large field of hunters, they do not leave their ground, although disturbed. Wheeling about in endless circles, and performing the most extraordinary variety of intricate evolutions, the shaggy herds of these eccentric and fierce-looking animals caper and gambol round the hunter on every side. While he is riding hard to obtain a family shot at a herd in front of him, other herds are charging down wind on his right and left, and, having described a number of circular movements, they take up positions upon the very ground across which he rode only a few minutes before.

Singly, and in small troops of four or five individuals, the old bull wildebeests may be seen stationed at intervals throughout the plains, standing motionless during a whole forenoon, coolly watching with a philosophic eye the movements of the other game, eternally uttering a loud snorting noise, and also a short, sharp cry, which is peculiar to them. When the hunter approaches these old bulls, they commence whisking their long white tails in a most eccentric manner; then springing into the air, begin prancing and capering, and pursue each other in circles at their utmost speed. Suddenly they all pull up together, to overhaul the intruder, when two bulls will often commence fighting in the most violent manner, dropping on their knees at every shock; then quickly wheeling about, they kick up their heels, whirl their tails with a fantastic flourish, and scour across the plain enveloped in a cloud of dust.

Throughout the greater part of the plains frequented by blesboks, numbers of the sun-baked hills or mounds of clay formed by the white ants occur. The average height of the ant-hills, in these districts, is from two to three feet, and they are generally distant from one to three hundred yards

from each other, being more or less thickly placed in different parts. These are of the greatest service to the hunter, enabling him with facility to conceal himself on the otherwise open plain, and I was thus enabled to hide, and select out of the herds the bucks and bulls carrying the finest heads, for my collection.

On the 28th, having breakfasted, I rode forth with two after-riders, to try for blesboks, and took up a position on the plain, lying flat on my breast behind the ant-hills, while my after-riders, one of whom led my horse, endeavoured to move them towards me. We found blesboks abundant, but extremely wary; I wounded several, but did not bag one. I shot however two springboks, which were fat, and of the flesh of which we stood much in need. I had several chances at wildebeests, but I had resolved not to fire at them.

The following day was the 1st of March, and after an early breakfast I again took the field, with my after-riders and a spare horse; late in the day I bagged a fine old blesbok: it was a family shot, running at two hundred yards; I also shot a springbok, and mortally wounded another; both were very long shots.

The blesbok is one of the finest antelopes in the world, and the buck is allowed to be the swiftest in Africa; he nevertheless attains very high condition, and at this period was exceedingly fat. I was surprised and delighted with the exquisite manner in which his colours are blended together; nothing can exceed the beauty of this animal. Like most other African antelopes, his skin emitted a delicious and powerful perfume of flowers and sweet-smelling herbs. A secretion issues from between his hoofs, which has likewise a pleasing perfume.

The 3rd was a charmingly cool day. At an early hour in the morning I was visited by a party of Boers, some of whom I had previously met; they were proceeding to hunt wildebeest and blesbok, and were mounted on mares, each of which was followed by a foal. They requested me to join them in their jag, but I excused myself, preferring to hunt alone. As soon as they were out of sight I saddled up, and rode north, with *two after-riders*, to try for blesboks. I found the country

extremely pleasant for riding, for it resembled a well-kept lawn.

On the following day, when returning to camp, I started, in a low-lying grassy vley, a herd of "vlacke varcke," or wild hogs; it consisted of seven half-grown young ones and three old ones, one of which carried a pair of enormous tusks, projecting eight or nine inches beyond his lip. Being well mounted on "The Grey," and the ground favourable, I at once gave chase, and selecting an old boar, after two miles of sharp galloping lost him in the burrows of the ant-bear. I endeavoured to smoke him out, but without success.

On the 7th we inspanned, and trekked east about ten miles, encamping near a small isolated farmhouse, which had lately been vacated by a Boer, owing to the impending war with the Griquas. Here we found plenty of old cow-dung, a fortunate circumstance, for fuel is very scarce throughout the whole of the blesbok country, there being often great difficulty in obtaining sufficient to boil the kettle for coffee. There were two strong springs of excellent water here, in which cresses flourished, and below the fountains a small garden; here I found a welcome supply of onions and other vegetables. Game was abundant on all sides; wildebeests and springboks pasturing within a few hundred yards of the door.

On the 12th I bagged two bull wildebeests and two springboks to the northward of my camp. In the evening I took my pillow and "komberse," or skin blanket, to the margin of a neighbouring vley, where I had observed doe blesboks drink; of these I had not yet secured a single specimen, though I was very anxious to do so, as they carry fine horns, which, though not so thick as those of the males, are more gracefully formed. About midnight an old wildebeest came and stood within ten yards of me, but I was too lazy to fire at him, and all night I heard something moving in the cracked earth beneath my pillow, but, believing it to be a mouse, did not feel much concerned about the matter. On the following morning no blesbok appearing, I stalked an old springbok through the rushes and shot him, and after having concealed him, held for camp, despatching two men to bring home the venison and my bedding.

While taking my breakfast I observed them returning, carrying a large and deadly serpent; and I at once felt certain it must be the creature I had heard the previous night beneath my pillow. On asking them where they had killed it, they replied, "In your bed." They had discovered the horrid reptile sunning itself on the edge of my blanket, until perceiving them it glided beneath it; it was a large specimen of the black variety of the puff adder, one of the most poisonous serpents of Africa, death ensuing within an hour after its bite.

On the 15th I had a very good day's sport. As the day dawned I peeped from my hole, and saw troops of blesboks feeding on every side of me, but none came within range. I shot one springbok; and having concealed him in the rushes, walked to camp. After breakfast, I took the field with Kleinboy and the Bushman, and rode north. My first shot was amongst a herd of thirty wildebeests, one of which I wounded and recovered the following day. I also stalked a stag hartebeest after the most approved Highland fashion; he was a princely old fellow, carrying splendid horns and a beautiful coat of new hair; I thought I could never sufficiently admire him. Having removed the head and skin, we made for camp, and on my way I was tempted to try a long shot at one of two old blesboks that kept capering to leeward of us. Sitting down on the grass, and resting both elbows on my knees (a manner of firing much practised by the Boers), I let fly, and made a famous shot, sending the ball through the middle of the blesbok's shoulder at upwards of two hundred and fifty yards; on receiving it, he cantered forward a short distance, and fell dead. The rifle I used in those days was a double-barrelled two-grooved one, by Dixon of Edinburgh; with this I managed to make such superior shooting to that with the old style of rifle, that I considered the latter as a mere popgun in comparison with the other. In the evening I took up a position in my shooting hole northward of the camp. About an hour after the moon rose, a troop of wildebeests came and stood within thirty yards of me; I fired, and a very large bull with one horn fell to the shot. If I had allowed this bull to lie there, my chance of



further sport was over for that night and the following morning. I therefore took the old fellow by his horn, and, exerting my utmost strength and taking time, I managed to drag him as he fell, and still living, to a hollow beside the water, in which I concealed him. In half an hour another troop of wildebeests came and stood snuffing on the spot where he had fallen. I fired, and a fine old bull received the ball in the shoulder, and bounding forward a hundred yards, rolled over in the dust.

On the 16th I hunted on the plains to the north-east, killing one springbok, and at night watched a distant vley, and got a fright which I shall remember to my dying day. Soon after the moon rose, a troop of wildebeests came within range; at one of these I fired, when he dropped to the shot, the ball passing through the spine. A little after this I discharged my other barrel at a large spotted hyæna, returned my rifle to its holster without loading either barrel, and presently was asleep.

I had not slept long when my slumbers were disturbed by strange sounds; I dreamt that lions were rushing about in quest of me, and, the sounds increasing, awoke with a sudden start, uttering a loud shriek. I then heard the rushing of light feet as of a pack of wolves close on every side of me, accompanied by the most unearthly noises, and on raising my head, to my utter horror I saw myself surrounded by savage wild dogs. Right and left, and within a few paces of me, stood two lines of these ferocious-looking animals cocking their ears and stretching their necks to have a look at me; while two large troops, in which there were at least forty, kept dashing backwards and forwards across my wind, chattering and growling with the most extraordinary volubility. Another troop of wild dogs were fighting over the wildebeest I had shot, and on beholding them I expected no other fate than to be instantly torn to pieces, which made the blood curdle over my cheeks and my hair bristle on my head. However, I had the presence of mind to remember that the human voice and a determined bearing might overawe them, and accordingly, springing to my feet, I stepped on to the little ledge surrounding the hole, where, drawing myself up to my full height, I waved my large blanket with both hands, at the

same time addressing my savage assembly in a loud and solemn manner. This had the desired effect: the wild dogs removed to a more respectful distance, barking at me like collies; upon this I snatched up my rifle and commenced loading, and before this was accomplished the entire pack had retreated. The wildebeest I had shot was picked clean by fifteen hyænas before the morning.

For the two next days I was annoyed by a cunning old bull wildebeest, which, having discovered my retreat, kept sentry over me, and successfully drove away every troop of his fellows that approached my vley to drink. Feeding just out of rifle-range, he not only warned his comrades of their danger by fixing his eye on my place of concealment and snorting loudly, but when this failed drove the other wildebeests from me in the most determined manner, like a collie dog driving sheep. Before leaving my hole, however, on the second morning, I had my revenge. A troop of cows, heedless of his warnings, approached the vley, and in his anxiety for their safety he neglected his own. Coming for the first time within long rifle-range, I put up my after-sights and let drive at his ribs; the ball struck him, when, kicking up his heels and flourishing his long white tail, the old bull bounded away, and disappeared over a ridge.

The night of the 19th was to me rather a memorable one, as being the first on which I had the satisfaction of hearing the deep-toned thunder of the lion's roar, and although there was no one to inform me by what beast the haughty and impressive sounds which echoed through the wilderness were produced, I had little difficulty in divining. There was no mistake about it; I at once knew, as well as if accustomed to it from my infancy, that the appalling sound uttered within half a mile of me was no other than the voice of the mighty and terrible king of beasts. The dignified and truly monarchical appearance of the lion has long rendered him famous amongst his fellow quadrupeds, and his appearance and habits have often been described by abler pens than mine, nevertheless I consider that a few remarks, resulting from a long acquaintance with him by day and night, may not prove *uninteresting to the reader*. There is something so noble

and imposing in the presence of the lion, when seen walking with dignified self-possession, free and undaunted, on his native soil, that no description can convey an adequate idea of his appearance. The lion is exquisitely formed by nature for the predatory habits which he is destined to pursue. Combining in comparatively small compass the qualities of power and agility, he is enabled, by means of the tremendous machinery with which nature has gifted him, easily to overcome and destroy almost every beast, however superior to him in weight and stature.

Though considerably under four feet in height, he has little difficulty in dashing to the ground and overcoming the lofty giraffe, whose head towers above the trees of the forest, and whose skin is nearly an inch in thickness. The lion is the constant attendant of the vast herds of buffaloes which frequent the interminable forests of the interior; and a full-grown one, so long as his teeth are unbroken, generally proves a match for an old bull buffalo, which in size and strength greatly surpasses the most powerful breed of English cattle: he also preys on the zebra, all the larger varieties of the antelope, and on both varieties of the gnou.

Lions do not, as has been asserted, refuse to feast upon the venison that they have not killed themselves. I have repeatedly discovered lions of all ages feasting upon the carcases of various game quadrupeds which had fallen before my rifle. The lion is very generally found throughout the secluded parts of Southern Africa; he is, however, nowhere met with in great abundance, it being very rare to find more than three, or even two, families of lions frequenting the same district and drinking at the same fountain. When a greater number were met with, I remarked it was owing to long-protracted droughts, which, by drying nearly all the vleys, had compelled the game of various districts to crowd the remaining springs, and the lions, according to their custom, followed in the wake. It is a common thing to come upon a full-grown lion and lioness associating with three or four large young ones nearly full-grown, and at other times two or three full-grown males will be found associating and hunting together in a happy state of friendship.

The male lion is adorned with a long, rank, shaggy mane, which in some instances almost sweeps the ground, and varies in colour, some being very dark, others of a golden yellow; this has given rise to a prevailing opinion among the Boers that there are two distinct varieties of lions, which they distinguish by the respective names of "Schwart fore life" and "Chiel fore life:" this idea, however, is erroneous. The colour of the lion's mane is generally affected by his age; he attains his mane in the third year of his existence; at first it is of a yellowish colour; in the prime of life it is blackest; and when he has numbered many years, but still is in the full enjoyment of his power, it assumes a yellowish-grey, pepper-and-salt sort of colour. These old fellows are cunning and dangerous, and most to be dreaded. The females are utterly destitute of a mane, being covered with a short, thick, glossy coat of tawny hair. The manes and coats of lions frequenting open districts destitute of trees, such as the borders of the great Kalahari desert, are more full and handsome than those inhabiting the forest.

One of the most remarkable things connected with the lion is his voice, which is extremely grand and peculiarly striking; frequently it is a low, deep moaning, repeated five or six times, ending in faintly audible sighs; at others he startles the forest with solemn roars, reiterated in quick succession, each increasing in loudness to the third or fourth, when his voice dies away in low, muffled sounds, resembling distant thunder. At times, and not unfrequently, a troop may be heard roaring in concert, one assuming the lead, and two, three, or four more regularly taking up their parts; they roar loudest on cold frosty nights, but on no occasion are their voices to be heard in such perfection, or so intensely powerful, as when two or three strange troops of lions approach a fountain to drink at the same time. When this occurs, every member of each troop sounds a bold roar of defiance at the opposite party; and when one roars, all roar together, and each seems to vie with his comrades in the intensity and power of his voice. The grandeur of these nocturnal forest concerts is inconceivably striking and pleasing to the hunter's ear, and the effect is greatly enhanced if he is

alone in the depths of the forest, at the dead hour of midnight, and ensconced within twenty yards of the fountain which the surrounding troops of lions are approaching. Such has been my case scores of times; and though I am allowed to have a tolerably good taste for music, I consider the vocal harmony with which I was then regaled as the sweetest and most natural I ever heard.

Lions commence their sighing moans as the shades of evening envelop the forest, and continue their roar at intervals throughout the night; in distant and secluded regions, however, I have constantly heard them roaring loudly as late as nine and ten o'clock on a bright sunny morning. In hazy and rainy weather they are to be heard at every hour in the day, but their voice is subdued. It often happens that when two strange male lions meet at a fountain a terrific combat ensues, which not unfrequently ends in the death of one of them. The habits of the lion are strictly nocturnal; during the day he lies concealed beneath the shade of some low scrubby tree or wide-spreading bush, either in the level forest or on the mountain side; he is also partial to lofty reeds or fields of long rank yellow grass, such as occur in low-lying vleys. From these haunts he sallies forth at sundown, and commences his nightly prowling: when he is successful in his beat and has secured his prey, he does not roar much that night, but utters only and occasionally a few low moans—that is, provided no intruders approach him, otherwise the case would be very different.

Lions are ever most active and daring in dark and stormy nights; and consequently on such occasions the traveller ought more particularly to be on his guard. I remarked a fact connected with the lions' hour of drinking peculiar to themselves; they seemed unwilling to visit the fountains with good moonlight; thus, when the moon rose early, they deferred their hour of watering until late in the morning; and when the moon rose late, they drank at a very early hour in the night. By this acute system many a grisly lion saved his bacon, and is now luxuriating in the forests of South Africa, which had otherwise fallen by the barrels of my "Westley Richards." Owing to the tawny colour of the coat

with which nature has robed him, he is perfectly invisible in the dark ; and although I have often heard them at the water under my very nose, not twenty yards from me, I could not possibly make out so much as the outline of their forms. When a thirsty lion comes to the vley he stretches out his massive arms, lies down on his breast, and makes a loud lapping noise in drinking, not to be mistaken ; he continues lapping for a long while, and four or five times during the proceeding pauses for half a minute as if to take breath. In a dark night, their eyes glow like two balls of fire. The female as a general rule is more fierce and active than the male ; lionesses which have never had young are much more dangerous than those which have. At no time is the lion so much to be dreaded as when his partner has little ones ; at that season he knows no fear, and in the coolest and most intrepid manner will face a thousand men. A remarkable instance of this kind came under my own observation which confirmed the reports I had heard from the natives. One day, when out elephant-hunting in the territory of the "Baseleka," accompanied by two hundred and fifty men, I was astonished suddenly to behold a majestic lion slowly and steadily advancing towards us with a dignified step and undaunted bearing ; lashing his tail from side to side, and growling angrily, his terribly expressive eye resolutely fixed upon us, he displayed a show of ivory well calculated to inspire terror amongst the timid "Bechuanas." A headlong flight of the two hundred and fifty men was the immediate result ; and, in the confusion of the moment, eight of my dogs, which they had been leading, were allowed to escape in their couples. These instantly faced the lion, who, finding that by his bold bearing he had only succeeded in putting some of his enemies to flight, now became solicitous for the safety of his little family, with which the lioness was retreating in the back-ground, and turning about, he followed her with a haughty and independent step, growling fiercely at the dogs which trotted along on either side of him. Three troops of elephants, upon which I was marching for the attack, having been discovered a few minutes previous to this, I, with the most heartfelt *reluctance*, reserved my fire, and about twenty

minutes afterwards the possession of two noble elephants repaid my forbearance.

Among Indian Nimrods a certain class of royal tigers is dignified with the appellation of "man-eaters;" these having once tasted human flesh, show a predilection for the same, and such are very naturally famed and dreaded among the natives. Elderly gentlemen of similar tastes and habits are occasionally met with among the lions in the interior of South Africa, and the danger of such neighbours may be easily imagined. I account for lions first acquiring this taste in the following manner: the Bechuana tribes of the far interior do not bury their dead, but unceremoniously carry them forth, and leave them lying exposed in the forest or on the plain, a prey to the lion and hyæna, or the jackal and vulture; and I can readily imagine that a lion, having thus once tasted human flesh, would have little hesitation, when opportunity presented itself, in springing upon and carrying off the unwary traveller or "Bechuana" inhabiting his country. Be this as it may, man-eaters occur; and on my fourth hunting expedition a horrible tragedy was acted one dark night in my little lonely camp by one of these formidable characters.

In winding up these few observations on the lion, which I trust will not have been tiresome to the reader, I may remark that lion-hunting, under any circumstances, is decidedly a dangerous pursuit; it may, nevertheless, be followed, to a certain extent, with comparative safety by those who have, naturally, a turn for that sort of thing. A recklessness of death, perfect coolness and self-possession, an acquaintance with the disposition and habits of lions, and a certain dexterity in the use of the rifle, are indispensable to him who would shine in the grand and exciting pastime of hunting this justly celebrated king of beasts.

## CHAPTER X.

BOER ENCAMPMENT—FEARFUL ENCOUNTER WITH A LIONESS—  
BATTLE OF SCHWART COPPICE.

On the 22nd of March I rode south to a distant farm, for the double purpose of obtaining some corn or meal, and of hearing the news of the impending war between the Boers and Griquas. On reaching the spot I found a large party of Boers encamped there; they had mustered for mutual protection, and their tents and waggon were drawn up on every side of the farm-house, forming a very lively appearance. They informed me that all their countrymen, and also the Griquas, were thus packed together in "lagers," or encampments, and that hostilities were about to commence. They remonstrated with me on what they were pleased to term my madness, in living alone in an isolated position in such sharp times, and invited me to place myself for protection under their banner. I endeavoured to persuade them to get up a party to hunt the lion; but this they declined to do, remarking that "a lion (like Johnnie Gordon's bagpipes) was not to be played with." Returning to my camp I bowled over a springbok at one hundred and fifty yards. On the 23rd, having breakfasted, I rode north, with after-riders, to try for blesboks; it was a cool day, with a strong easterly breeze; we found the game extremely wild, and as we proceeded, vast herds kept streaming on up the wind, darkening the plain before us, in thousands. About two miles north of the bushy mountain where I had first heard the lion roar, far in the vast level plain, were some mimosa-trees. Within a few hundred yards of these we discovered an old bull wildebeest, newly killed by a lion and half eaten; his large and striking foot-prints were deep in the sand, and so fresh that they seemed to have been imprinted only a few minutes before—moreover, there was not a single vulture near the carcase. We therefore felt



convinced that the lion must be lying somewhere near us, having hidden himself on our approach, and we searched for some time in the adjacent hollows, where the grass was very rank, but in vain. The game now became more and more wild, taking away into another district in long strings, like our island red-deer when hard driven; I accordingly gave it up, and turned my horse's head for camp. On my way there I bagged one blesbok and two bull wildebeests: one of these got the bullet through his heart, but nevertheless stood at bay for some time. After reaching the waggons I suddenly resolved to take men and horses with me, spend the night in the vicinity of the lion, and search early for him on the following morning; accordingly, while dinner was preparing, I occupied myself in cleaning and loading my three double-barrelled rifles, after which, having dined, I rode with Klein-boy and John Stofolus to my hole by the vley, where my bedding lay day and night. This spot was within a few miles of where we expected to fall in with the lion in the morning. We secured the three horses to one another, as there was no tree or bush within miles of us; but I could dispense with the animals, for I knew very well by the looks of the Hottentots that they would keep a vigilant eye over our destinies. I spent a most miserable night.

The wind, which had been blowing so fresh in the middle of the day, had subsided to a calm when the sun went down, and was now succeeded by an almost death-like stillness, which I too well knew was the harbinger of a coming tempest. We had not lain down an hour when the sky to leeward became black as pitch, and presently most vivid flashes of lightning followed one another in quick succession, accompanied by terrific peals of thunder. The wind, which, during the day, had been from the north-east, now, as is usual on such occasions, veered right round and came whistling up from the south-west, where the tempest was brewing, which in a few minutes more was upon us in all its fury, the rain descending in torrents on our devoted heads, while the lightning momentarily illumined, with the brilliancy of day, the darkness that reigned around. The whole plain became a sheet of water, and every thread of my clothes and bedding was thoroughly satu-

rated. My three rifles had excellent holsters, and with the help of two sheep-skins which I used instead of saddle-cloths I kept them quite dry. In two hours the tempest had passed away, but light rain fell till morning. About midnight we heard a lion roar a mile or so to the northward; and a little before the day dawned I again heard him in the direction of the carcase of the wildebeest we had found on the preceding day. Soon after this I gave the word to march, and finding my trousers lying in a pool of water, I converted a blanket into a long kilt by strapping it round my waist with my shooting-belt; the costume of my followers was equally unique. We held for the north end of the lion's mountain at a sharp pace, and gained it before there was light enough to see surrounding objects; as the day broke we reduced our pace, and rode slowly up towards the carcase in the middle of the vast level plain, on which were large herds of wildebeests, springbok, blesbok, and quaggas, which this day were as tame as they had been wild on the previous one—this is generally the case after a storm. The morning was cloudy; misty vapours hung on the shoulders of the neighbouring mountains, and the air was loaded with balmy perfume, emitted by the grateful plants and herbs. As we approached the carcase, I observed several jackals steal away, and some half-drowned-looking vultures sitting round it, but there was no appearance of the lion. I spent the next half-hour in riding across the plain looking for his spoor; but sought in vain, and being cold and hungry, turned my horse's head for camp, riding slowly along through the middle of the game, which would scarcely move out of rifle-range on either side of me.

Suddenly I observed a number of vultures standing on the plain about a quarter of a mile ahead of us, and close beside them a huge lioness, consuming a blesbok which she had killed, assisted in her repast by about a dozen jackals, that were feasting with her in the most friendly and confidential manner. Directing my followers' attention to the spot, I remarked, "I see the lion;" to which they replied, "Whar? whar? Yah! Almagtig! dat is he;" and instantly reining in *their steeds* and wheeling about, they pressed their

heels to their horses' sides, and were preparing to betake themselves to flight. I asked them what they were going to do? To which they answered, "We have not yet placed caps on our rifles." This was true; but while this short conversation was passing the lioness had observed us. Raising her full, round face, she overhauled us for a few seconds, and then set off at a smart canter towards a range of mountains some miles to the northward; the whole troop of jackals also started off in another direction, and there was, therefore, no time to think of caps. The first move was to bring her to bay, and not a second was to be lost. Spurring my good and lively steed, and shouting to my men to follow, I flew across the plain, and, being fortunately mounted on Colesberg, the flower of my stud, gained upon her at every stride; this was to me a joyful moment, and I at once made up my mind that she or I must die.

The lioness having had a long start of me, we went over a considerable extent of ground before I came up with her; she was a large full-grown beast, and the bare and level nature of the plain added to her imposing appearance. Finding I gained upon her, she reduced her pace from a canter to a trot, carrying her tail stuck out behind her, and slued a little to one side; I shouted loudly to her to halt, as I wished to speak with her, upon which she suddenly pulled up, and seated on her haunches like a dog, with her back towards me, not even deigning to look round, appeared to say to herself, "Does this fellow know who he is coming after?" Having thus sat for half a minute, as if involved in thought, she sprang to her feet, and, facing about, stood looking at me for a few seconds, moving her tail slowly from side to side, showing her teeth, and growling fiercely; she next made a short run forwards, making a loud, rumbling noise like thunder. This she did to intimidate me; but, finding that I did not flinch an inch nor seem to heed her hostile demonstrations, she quietly stretched out her massive arms, and lay down on the grass. My Hottentots now coming up, we all three dismounted, and, drawing our rifles from their holsters, looked to see if the powder was up in the nipples, and put on our caps. While this was doing, the lioness sat up, and showed evident symptoms of uneasiness, looking

st at us, and then behind her, as if to see if the coast was clear; after which she again made a short run towards us, uttering her deep-drawn murderous growls. Having secured the three horses to one another by their reins, we led them on as if we intended to pass her, in the hope of obtaining a clear roadside; but this she carefully avoided to expose, presenting her full front. I had given Stofolus my Moore rifle, with orders to shoot her if she should spring upon me, but on no account to fire before me; Kleinboy was to stand ready to lend me my Purday in case the two-grooved Dixon should not prove sufficient. My men as yet had been steady, but now they were in a precious stew, their faces assumed a ghastly paleness, and I had a painful feeling that I could place no reliance on them.

Now, then, for it, neck or nothing! She is within sixty yards of us and keeps advancing. Turning the horses' tails to her, I knelt on one side, and, taking a steady aim at her breast, let fly. The ball cracked loudly on her tawny hide, and crippled her in the shoulder, upon which she charged with an appalling roar, and in the twinkling of an eye was in the midst of us. At this moment Stofolus's rifle exploded from his hand, and Kleinboy, whom I had ordered to stand ready for me, danced about like a duck in a gale of wind; the lioness sprang upon Colesberg, and fearfully lacerated his ribs and munched with her horrid teeth and claws; the worst wound was on his haunch, which exhibited a sickening, yawning gash, more than twelve inches long, almost laying bare the dry bone. I was cool and steady, and did not feel in the least degree nervous, having fortunately great confidence in my own shooting; but I must confess that, when the whole fair was over, I felt it was a very awful situation and attended with extreme peril, as I had no friend with me on whom I could rely.

When the lioness sprang on Colesberg, I stood out from the ranks, ready with my second barrel for the first chance she could give me of a clear shot; this she quickly did; for, seemingly satisfied with the revenge she had now taken, she left Colesberg, and, sluing her tail to one side, trotted lightly past within a few paces of me. Taking one step to

the left, I pitched my rifle to my shoulder, and in another second the lioness was stretched on the plain; in the struggles of death she half turned on her back, and stretched her neck and fore arms convulsively, when she fell back to her former position; her mighty arms hung powerless by her side, her lower jaw fell, blood streamed from her mouth, and she expired. At the moment I fired my second shot, Stofolus, who hardly knew whether he was alive or dead, allowed the three horses to escape; these galloped frantically across the country; on which he and Kleinboy instantly started after them, leaving me standing alone and unarmed within a few paces of the lioness, which they, from their anxiety to be out of the way, evidently considered quite capable of doing further mischief.

Such is ever the case with these worthies, and with nearly all the natives of South Africa: no reliance can be placed on them; they will to a certainty forsake their master in the most dastardly manner in the hour of peril, and leave him in the lurch. A stranger, however, hearing these fellows recounting their own gallant adventures, when sitting in the evening along with their comrades round a blazing fire, or under the influence of their adored "Cape smoke" or native brandy, might fancy them to be the bravest of the brave. Having skinned the lioness and cut off her head, we placed her trophies upon Beauty, and held for camp, and before we had proceeded a hundred yards from the carcase, upwards of sixty vultures, whom the lioness had often fed, were feasting on her remains.

As to poor Colesberg, we led him slowly home, where having washed his wounds, and carefully stitched them together, I ordered the cold water cure to be adopted; under this treatment his wounds rapidly healed, and he eventually recovered. The sky remained overcast throughout the day. When the shades of evening set in, terror seemed to have taken possession of the minds of my followers, and they swore that the mate of the lioness, on finding her bones, would follow on our spoor and revenge her death. Under this impression they refused to remain about the waggons or in the tent after the sun went down; and having cut down the rafters and cupboards of the

Boer's house for fuel, they kindled a large fire in the kitchen, where they took up their quarters for the night.

I continued hunting here until the 29th, when I deemed it high time to return to Colesberg for the purpose of packing and storing my curiosities, increasing my establishment, and refitting generally, preparatory to starting for the land of elephants in the far forests of the interior; the distemper or horse sickness, which rages in those parts during the summer months, might be expected shortly to be past; there was therefore not much time to lose. The morning was spent in stowing the waggons, greasing the wheels, securing the pots, gridirons, spades, &c., overhauling the yokes, rheims, straps, and other gear, preparatory to inspanning, and in the afternoon, turning our faces to the south, we marched upon Colesberg.

Having proceeded ten miles, we halted for the night; it rained heavily till morning. My oxen were in fine condition, and, having done but little work of late, were fresh and obstreperous; on the following day we crossed the Riet River. The country was very heavy, owing to the recent rains, and some of my gear, which was rotten, broke repeatedly, causing much delay. At sundown we halted at an encampment of Boers. These men were all rebels and our enemies, being, at that very moment, at war with our allies, the Griquas and Bastards, whom we shortly afterwards assisted against the Boers. I deemed it rather a rash step thus coolly to march through the enemy's country, bearding as it were the lion in his den: there was, however, no help for it; so I resolved to take the bull by the horns, and put on a bold face. The least I might have expected was to have my waggons most thoroughly ransacked and plundered, if not taken from me altogether, and this they would certainly have done if I had not been dressed in the garb of Old Gaul, which I always wore, and declared myself a Berg Scot.

These Boers happened to be short of coffee, a beverage of which they are extremely fond; I had fortunately a large supply in my waggons, and as I was on my way to Colesberg, had no objection to dispose of it. Accordingly, by presenting the ladies of the leading families with a few half-pounds of

that berry, and selling them the remainder of my stock at a moderate price, I managed to secure the good graces of the whole, and they were pleased to express their opinion that I was a "ghooe carle," or good fellow. Hearing that a few days previous I had bagged a savage lioness, and beholding my trophies, they seemed quite astonished, exclaiming to one another, "Mi scapsels! vat zoorten mens is de?" signifying, "My stars and garters! what sort of man is this?" In the course of the evening and during the night several armed parties of Boers halted at this lager to refresh, and then passed on to join the head-quarters of their army, which was encamped about forty miles to the southward, at a place called "Schwart Coppice." Each of them was provided with one or more pack-horses bearing his commissariat and ammunition, and many of them had Hottentot and Bushmen after-riders; their sole weapon consisted of their roer, or long gun; each wore a leathern shooting-belt round his waist, and a large bullock's horn containing powder dangled by his side.

On the 31st I continued my march, and on the evening of the 2nd of April reached Philipolis, a missionary station, and the chief town of the Bastards' country. My road had led between the encampments of the contending parties, and troops of mounted Boers had been scouring the country in every direction, plundering all they could lay their hands on, and sweeping off the cattle and horses of the Bastards. Halting at an encampment of the latter on the preceding day, I was much amused by their taking me for a missionary; my costume not being very clerical, and consisting of a dirty shirt and an old Gordon tartan kilt. From a Bastard in the vicinity of Philipolis I obtained two large rough dogs, in exchange for three pounds of coffee and a little tea; the names of these dogs were "Bles" and "Flam." Bles was of an extremely fierce and savage disposition. On the evening of the 3rd we encamped on the northern bank of the Great Orange River, at a place called "Boata's Drift," nearly opposite Colesberg. Our march had been through a succession of mountains, covered with excellent pasture to their summits. It rained heavily throughout the day. After inspecting the drift or ford on the following morning, we calculated that

the river was too high for the waggons to cross ; and by sending a man over on horseback, according to the most approved custom, ascertained that to be the case. I therefore instructed my men to proceed to Norval's Punt, a long march up the river, there to cross and join me in Colesberg on the evening of the following day. Having breakfasted, I saddled "The Immense Brute," and, taking the ford high up, managed to cross the stream in safety, though the current had twice taken my horse off his legs. In two hours I entered Colesberg, where I found the officers of the 91st and all my other friends in great force.

My waggons did not make their appearance till the afternoon of the third day. I took up my quarters with my old friend Mr. Paterson, who also kindly accommodated one half of my stud in his stables ; the other I picketed in those of my old regiment, the Cape Mounted Rifles—my oxen fed day and night in the neighbouring mountains. On the 7th we off-loaded the waggons, and made a grand parade of my hunting trophies in front of Paterson's house, in the centre of the village : this attracted crowds of persons throughout the day. In the afternoon of the 8th, Mr. Rawstorne, the resident magistrate, received despatches from Adam Kok, chief of the Bastards, stating that the Boers had commenced active hostilities, and craving assistance from Government. Accordingly, in the evening an order was issued that all the available force in the garrison should march upon the Orange River next day, which I considered an intense bore, as I must thereby lose the society of my friends. The following morning all was bustle and preparation throughout the village, the military preparing for the march, and the merchants loading up their waggons with commissariat stores for the supply of the troops, while many a dark-eyed nymph wiped the hot tear from her expressive eye, and heaved a deep-drawn sigh as she reflected on the absence of her lover and the casualties of war. At half-past twelve the men mustered on the parade-ground, and marched out of the village for Alleman's Drift; Paterson kindly offered me his quarters as long as I remained in Colesberg, and desired I would not spare his cellar, which contained *most excellent* wine. On the 15th I rode out to visit



the 91st, who were encamped at Alleman's Drift, on the south side of the river, and found my friends the military enjoying themselves; the privates were angling and dragging the river, and they captured lots of mullet and barbel, averaging from one to four pounds in weight. At this spot the Orange River and the surrounding scenery are very beautiful, reminding me of the Highlands; at one bold reach the waters are hemmed in by stupendous granite rocks, which cause a deep and sweeping rapid; below are long pools, enclosed by banks adorned with drooping willows and everlasting verdure.

A party of artillery and a detachment of the 7th Dragoon Guards were reported *en route* from Fort Beaufort, to assist the 91st in their operations against the Boers; skirmishes were daily occurring between the belligerents on the opposite side, and expresses from Adam Kok were continually arriving in camp, soliciting assistance. The manner in which these skirmishes were conducted was very amusing, and illustrative of the high courage of the contending parties. Every day, after breakfast, the Boers and Bastards were in the habit of meeting and peppering away at one another till the afternoon, when each party returned to its respective encampment. The distance at which they fired at one another might be somewhere above a couple of miles, and large herds of springboks and wildebeests were quietly pasturing on the ground between them. Some of these neutrals occasionally fell before the hissing balls of the redoubted warriors. Before dismissing the subject of the rebellion of '45, I may state that soon after this, the 91st and Cape Corps being reinforced with a party of artillery and a detachment of the 7th Dragoon Guards, crossed the Orange River, advanced upon the Boers' position by forced marches, and put them to flight, when two pieces of ordnance, their waggons, and commissariat fell into our hands. Thus ended the memorable battle of Schwart Cop-pice; and since that time the valorous Bastards have been loud in their own praises, declaring that "they are the boys to put the Boers up to the time o' day."

On the forenoon of the 16th I rode through the river to visit a person of the name of Bain, who had made several trips into

the interior; this gentleman gave me much valuable information and dazzling accounts of the sport I might expect. He recommended my trekking down the Orange River to a drift near Rhama, and thence proceed by Campbellsdorp to Kuruman, a missionary station distant from Colesberg about two hundred and fifty miles, where I should obtain a Bechuana interpreter, and all necessary information from the resident missionary. On the following day, having taken leave of my kind friends and brother sportsmen, I rode into Colesberg, and had the pleasure of meeting two Nimrods, Mr. Murray and Mr. Oswell, proceeding, like myself, on a hunting expedition into the far interior—the former a keen salmon-fisher from the banks of Tay; the latter a civilian in the Honourable East India Company's service. During my stay in Colesberg my specimens were carefully sewn up in canvas, and nailed down in cases; and perishable articles, such as skins and stuffed heads, were hermetically sealed, being carefully soldered up in tin by Mr. Privet, the tinsmith, one of the leading members of the community of Colesberg.

I covered my waggons with new sails, and had the wheels and iron-work carefully overhauled by the blacksmith—purchased several excellent horses and trek-oxen—increased my kennel of dogs to twelve stout, rough, serviceable-looking curs—and purchased a large elephant-gun, carrying four to the pound. I also engaged two additional Hottentots, named Johannus and Kleinfeldt—replenished my supplies in every department—and on the 22nd, everything being ready, I managed to collect all my runaway men, dogs, oxen, and horses, and, after much bustle and angry altercation with my inebriated and swarthy crew, my caravan was in motion, and I started on my distant journey. We were followed by the female acquaintances of our Hottentots, screaming and yelling, at the same time catching up handfuls of red dust, which they tossed into the air with true Hottentot action; having no hair to rend, they contented themselves with scratching their woolly pates and rending their petticoats, which they soon reduced to tatters. Among other things that I loaded up with while in Colesberg was a number of common muskets, which were represented to me as being the most available

articles to barter for ivory with the tribes in the interior; these I afterwards turned to good account, and regretted that I had not purchased ten times as many. As it was probable that, in the event of my encamping too near Colesberg that evening, my followers would avail themselves of the opportunity to levant under cover of the night, and return to take another farewell of their wives and sweethearts, I made up my mind, having once succeeded in setting them in motion, to give them a good spell of it; and accordingly, there being a fine moon, I did not permit them to outspan until after midnight. We held a westerly course, steering for the Saltpan's Drift, down the Orange River, where I intended crossing, and thus avoided the hostile Boers, who were scouring the country immediately opposite Colesberg.

On the fourth day I reached Saltpan's Drift, and crossed with considerable difficulty, the waggons repeatedly sticking fast in the deep sand. The opposite bank was extremely steep, and required an hour's cutting with our pickaxes and shovels. We passed the farms of several Boers, from whom I purchased three excellent dogs, named "Wolf," "Prince," and "Bonteberg." Continuing our march, on the 28th we passed through the Griqua kraal named Rhama. This morning I discovered Kleinboy very coolly smoking his pipe over my loose, dilapidated powder-casks; upon which I seized the culprit, and handled him rather roughly. This so disgusted my friend that he dashed his pipe on the ground in true Hottentot style, and swore he would go no farther with me; the prospect of dinner, however, off a fine fat sheep induced Mr. Kleinboy to alter his mind on the subject, and he sulkily returned to his duty. On the 4th of May we made the Vaal River, and crossed it at my old drift. Here a party of Korannas rode up to the waggons, mounted on pack-oxen; their bridles were simply thongs attached to sticks passed through a hole in the animal's nose, and their saddles a sheepskin secured with a thong across the back. In the evening we trekked half way to Campbellsdorp. On the march my dogs killed two fine porcupines, by tearing off their heads, the only vulnerable part, getting at the same time their own noses and shoulders full of the quills. The following day we passed

through Campbellsdorp, where I was kindly welcomed by Mr. Bartlett, the resident missionary, from whom I received a liberal present of bread and vegetables.

On the third day after leaving that place we reached Daniel's Kufl, a kraal of Griquas under Waterboer. The country through which we passed was level and uninteresting, no hill nor landmark relieving the ocean-like expanse and sameness of the scene. It was in parts covered as far as I could see with a species of bush, averaging about nine feet in height, having a grey leaf and bunches of small grey blossoms, yielding a very sweet and powerful aromatic odour. In the evening we continued our march to a hot spring called Kramer's Fonteyn; and on the 9th held for Koning, a very distant water on the road to Kuruman. Towards midnight my men commenced driving furiously, and finding they were under the influence of liquor, I ordered them to halt and outspan, when Mr. Kleinboy only drove the harder, so that I found it necessary to send him flying off the box; this brought us to a halt, but I had had only a short nap when I was awakened by the cattle, and found that my men were inspanning with the intention of returning to the colony. Seeing remonstrance vain, I had recourse to my double-barrelled rifle, the sight of which made my followers relinquish their intention, and retiring to the shelter of a bush they shortly fell asleep. I kept sentry over the waggons during the remainder of the night, and on the following morning roused my ruffians, and ordered them to inspan, which orders they mechanically obeyed, swearing, however, that this was the last time they would do so.

Having proceeded about ten miles, we arrived at Koning; a vley of fine spring-water, about six hundred yards in length, densely covered with lofty reeds from twelve to fifteen feet high. Here was spoor of zebras and hartebeests, and the spot was said never to be without lions. In the afternoon I observed that my men were again in liquor, and at first imagined that the Griquas had supplied them with brandy; but examining my cases I discovered that one had been broken into, and two bottles of brandy stolen. This was a *second night of anxiety and trouble*, and I kept watch with

my rifle in my hand; the weather was piercingly cold; in the morning the ground was white with hoar-frost, and a thick coating of ice covered the pools of water. At mid-day on the 11th we left Koning, and continued our march to Kuruman, halting at sundown without water; the view on our left was bounded by the Kamhanni Mountains, an extensive rocky chain. In every other direction vast plains, covered with rank yellow grass, interspersed with clumps of grey-leaved bushes, extended as far as the eye could reach. Shortly before outspanning we started three leopards that were feasting on a duiker. Throughout all this country game was very scarce.

On the following day we reached Kuruman, or New Lita-koo, a lovely green spot in the wilderness, strongly contrasting with the sterile and inhospitable regions by which it is surrounded. I was here kindly welcomed and hospitably entertained by Mr. Moffat and Mr. Hamilton, both missionaries of the London Society, and also by Mr. Hume, an old trader, long resident at Kuruman. The gardens here are extensive and extremely fertile; besides corn and vegetables they contained vines, peach, nectarines, apple, orange, and lemon-trees, all of which in their seasons bear a profusion of the most delicious fruit. These gardens were irrigated with the most liberal supply of water from a powerful fountain which gushes forth, at once forming a little river, from a subterraneous cave: this has several low narrow mouths, but within it is lofty and extensive; it is stated by the natives to extend to a very great distance under ground. The natives about Kuruman and the surrounding districts have generally embraced the Christian religion. Mr. Moffat kindly showed me through his printing establishment, church, and school-rooms, which were well-built, and altogether on a scale that would not have disgraced one of the towns of the more enlightened colony. It was Mr. Moffat who reduced the Bechuana language to writing; he has since printed thousands of Sichuana Testaments, as also tracts and hymns, which were eagerly purchased by the converted natives; and this gentleman is admirably calculated to excel in his important calling. With a noble and athletic frame Mr. Moffat possesses a face on which forbearance and Christian

charity are very plainly written; and his mental and physical attainments are great, minister, gardener, blacksmith, gunsmith, mason, carpenter, glazier—every hour of the day finds this worthy pastor engaged in some useful employment—setting, by his own exemplary piety and industrious habits, a good example to others to go and do likewise.

Mr. Moffat informed me that a Dr. Livingstone, who was married to his eldest daughter, had lately established a missionary station among the Bakatlas at Mabotsa, in the vale of Bakatla, about fourteen days' journey to the north-east. Thither he advised me at once to proceed, as few of the larger varieties of game could now be expected to be found to the southward of Bakatla. He represented that my falling in with elephants, even in the country immediately beyond Bakatla, was very uncertain, and recommended me, if I was determined to have good elephant-shooting, to endeavour to push on to the remote and endless forests beyond the mountains of Bamangwato, in the territory of Sicomy, the great and paramount chief of that country. There would also, he said, be a probability of obtaining ivory in barter from Sicomy, he being reported to possess large quantities of that valuable commodity. With Mr. Moffat's assistance I engaged a Bechuana, of the name of Isaac, in the capacity of interpreter in the Dutch and Sichuana languages; from Mr. Hume I purchased a supply of wheat, and on the following day set all my people to work on a mill of Mr. Moffat's to reduce it to flour.

On the 15th, having taken leave of my friends at Kuruman, I continued my journey in a north-easterly course through a heavy sandy country of boundless level plains, stretching away on every side, covered with rank yellow grass, which, waving in the breeze, imparted the idea of endless fields of ripe corn. At sundown we crossed the Matluarin River, an insignificant stream, encamping on its northern bank; and on the following morning pursued our journey through the same description of country, varied, however, with detached clumps of thorny mimosa. This day we came across a swarm of locusts resting for the night, which covered the grass and large bushes. Locusts afford fattening and wholesome food to man, *birds, and all kinds of beasts*; cows and horses, lions, jackals,

hyænas, antelopes, elephants, &c. devour them. We met a party of Batlapis, who were collecting them in large quantities. The cold frosty night had rendered them unable to take wing until the sun should restore their powers. As it was difficult to obtain sufficient food for my dogs, I and Isaac took a large blanket, which we spread under a bush, the branches of which were bent to the ground with the mass of locusts ; having shaken them, I had in an instant more than I could carry on my back ; and these we roasted for ourselves and dogs.

Soon after daybreak I saw the locusts stretching to the west in vast clouds, resembling smoke ; but the wind veering round, brought them back to us and they flew over our heads, for some time actually darkening the sun. In the evening I continued my march by moonlight, and halted within a few miles of Motito, an extensive kraal of the Batlapis, a tribe of Bechuanas.

## CHAPTER XI.

MOTITO—THE BECHUANA TRIBES—BAKATLA—DR. LIVINGSTONE—  
RHINOCEROS-HUNTING.

AT an early hour on the 17th I outspanned at Motito, where I was kindly received by Monsieur Loga and Mr. Edwards, the former a French missionary stationed at Motito, and the latter an English missionary from Mabotsa; another French missionary, named Monsieur Lemue, belonging to the station, was absent. As I have now reached the southern borders of that vast tract of Southern Africa inhabited by the numerous tribes of the Bechuanas, it will be necessary, before proceeding further, to give a sketch of their manners and customs. They are a lively and intelligent race of people, and remarkable for their good humour. They are well formed, if not starved in infancy, and have pleasing features and very fine eyes and teeth; their hair is short and woolly, and their complexion is of a light copper colour. The various tribes live in kraals. Their wigwams are built in a circular form, and thatched with long grass; the floor and wall, inside and out, are plastered with a compound of clay and cow-dung, and the entrance to them is about three feet high and two feet broad. Each wigwam is surrounded with a hedge of wickerwork, and the entire kraal is surrounded by a strong fence of wait-a-bit thorns, protecting the inmates from lions and other animals.

The dress of the men consists of a kaross, or skin cloak, which hangs gracefully from their shoulders; and another garment, termed tsecha, that encircles their loins, and is likewise made of skin; their feet are protected by a simple sandal formed of the skin of the buffalo or camelopard, and on their legs and arms are ornaments of brass and copper of different patterns of their own manufacture. The men also wear a few beads round their necks and on their arms, besides which they carry a variety of other appendages. The majority of



these are believed to possess a powerful charm to preserve them from evil; one is a small hollow bone, through which they blow when in danger; another is a set of dice formed of ivory, which they rattle in their hands and cast on the ground to ascertain if they are to be lucky in any enterprise in which they may be about to engage; they have also a host of bits of root and bark which are medicinal. From their necks also depend gourd snuff-boxes made of an extremely diminutive species of pumpkin, trained to grow in a bottle-like shape. They never move without their arms, which consist of a shield, a bundle of assagais, a battle-axe, and a knobkerry. The shields are formed of the hide of the buffalo or camelopard; their shape among some tribes is oval, among others round; the assagai is a light spear or javelin, having a wooden shaft about six feet in length attached to it. Some of these are formed solely for throwing, and a skilful warrior will send one through a man's body at one hundred yards. Another variety of assagai is made for stabbing; the blades of these are stouter, the shafts shorter and thicker, and they are found mostly among the tribes very far in the interior. Their battle-axes are elegantly formed, consisting of a triangular-shaped blade, fastened in a handle formed of the horn of the rhinoceros. The men employ their time in war and hunting, and in dressing the skins of wild animals. The dress of the women consists of a kaross depending from the shoulders, and a short kilt formed of the skin of the pallah, or some other antelope. Around their necks, arms, waists, and ankles they wear large and cumbrous coils of beads of a variety of colours, tastefully arranged in different patterns. The women chiefly employ their time in cultivating their fields and gardens, in which they rear corn, pumpkins, and water-melons; and likewise in harvesting the crops and grinding corn. Both men and women go bareheaded: they anoint their heads with "sibelo," a shining composition, being a mixture of fat and a grey sparkling ore, having the appearance of mica. Some of the tribes besmear their bodies with fat and red clay, imparting to them the appearance of Red Indians. Most of the tribes possess cattle; these are attended to and milked solely by the men, a woman never being allowed to set foot within the

cattle-kraal. Polygamy is allowed, and any man may keep as many wives as he pleases: the wife, however, must be purchased. In rich tribes the price of a wife is ten head of cattle; but among the poorer ones a few spades. These implements are manufactured by themselves, fastened in the end of a long shaft, and used as our labourers use the hoe. Rows of women may be seen digging together in the fields singing songs, to which they keep time with their spades.

The name of the chief at Motito was Motchuara, a subordinate of the great chief Mahura. He was very anxious that I should remain a day with him, and trade in ostrich feathers and karosses; but being desirous to push forward, I resumed my march in the afternoon, and trekked on till near midnight, when I encamped in an extensive forest of grey and ancient-looking cameeldorn trees. These were the finest I had yet seen in Africa, each tree assuming a wide-spreading and picturesque appearance; they were detached and in groups, like oaks in an English deer-park. Many of them were inhabited by whole colonies of the social grosbeak, with whose wonderful habitations the branches were loaded. These remarkable birds, which are about the size and appearance of the British greenfinch, construct their nests and live socially together under one common roof, the whole fabric being formed of dry grass, and exhibiting at a short distance the appearance of a haystack stuck up in the tree; the entrances to the nests are from beneath; they are built side by side, and when seen from below resemble a honeycomb.

The following morning we continued our march through the forest, the road being extremely heavy, and consisting of soft loose sand. Having proceeded about six miles, emerging from the forest, we entered once more on a wide-spreading open country, covered in some parts with bushes, and in others only with grass. Another hour brought us to Little Chooi, a large saltpan, where we obtained water for ourselves and cattle from a deep pit artificially made. Here I heard of a mysterious inland lake, stated by the natives to be due west from Bakatla, while those of Bamangwato assert that it is situated two hundred and fifty miles to the northward, and

always pointed out to me the north-west as its position. They said the tribes on its banks were possessed of canoes; that its waters were salt; and that every day they retired to feed, and again returned, by which I understood that this lake, whatever it may be, is affected by some tide.

At three p.m. we inspanned, and held on till midnight, crossing a desert and sandy country. In the vicinity of Chooi we passed an extensive range of old pitfalls, formed for entrapping game; they were dug in the form of a crescent, and occupied an extent of nearly a quarter of a mile. Loharon, an uninteresting and desolate spot, was reached the following day, and on the 20th we passed through a very level country, covered with detached bushes.

The plains here were bare and open, and resembled the country to the southward of the Vaal, with which I subsequently ascertained it to be connected, in a due southerly course, by an endless succession of similar plains, throughout the entire extent of which the blesbok and black wildebeest are abundant. While galloping after a herd of zebras, "The Immense Brute" put his foot into a hole, and coming down with the broad of his back on the calf of my right leg, bruised it so severely as to incapacitate me from walking for several days. About midday we resumed our march, and in the evening reached Great Chooi, a very large saltpan at that time full of water; here I found, for the first time, the bones and skull of a rhinoceros. My interpreter informed me this animal had long left the spot; to his surprise, however, we discovered fresh spoor by the fountain. Continuing our march, we entered on the 22nd a new kind of country; boundless open plains being succeeded by endless forests of dwarfish trees and bushes, the ground slightly undulating, and covered with a variety of rich grasses and aromatic herbs. The old and seldom-trodden waggon-track we followed seemed a favourite footpath for a troop of lions, their large and heavy spoor being deeply imprinted on it. At sundown we encamped on the Siklagole River, a periodical stream, in the gravelly bed of which fine spring-water was obtained by digging. As we were in great want of flesh, my

hungry pack being nearly starving, I resolved to rest my oxen on the following day, and hunt for eland, the spoor of several having been seen near our encampment.

On the morning of the 23rd I rode east with after-riders and a packhorse; the country resembled an interminable park, being adorned with a continued succession of picturesque dwarfish forest-trees single and in groups, and this, with the exception of a few grassy open plains, is the character of the country from Siklagole as far as the mountains of Bakatla. On the 31st we reached the Kurrichane mountain range, and having crossed it, travelled through a fine valley about three miles, to a gorge in the mountains which connected it with the great vale of Bakatla. Through this gorge ran a stream of the purest crystal water, our road lying along its banks, over large masses of stone and ledges of rock, which threatened every moment the destruction of the waggons.

Following the stream for half a mile, we arrived at Mabotsa, the kraal of Moseleley, king of the Bakatlas, a tribe of Bechuanas, where I was kindly received by Dr. Livingstone, the resident missionary. The vale of Bakatla is one of the most beautiful spots in Africa, a broad and level strath extending from east to west, and bounded by picturesque rocky mountains, beautifully wooded to their summits; in some parts it is adorned with groves and patches of forest-trees of endless variety, in others open, carpeted with luxuriant grass. A large portion of the valley, opposite to the town, is cultivated by the Bakatla women, and a succession of extensive corn-fields stretch away to the northward of the kraal; these had lately been denuded of their crops, but a goodly show of pumpkins and water-melons still remained on the fields. The following day was Sunday, and I attended Divine service in a temporary place of worship that had been erected by the missionaries. It was amusing to remark, in the costume of the Bakatlas on this occasion, the progress of the march of civilization; all who had managed to get hold of any European article of dress had donned it, some appearing in trousers without shirts, and others in shirts without trousers.

The 2nd of June was the coldest day I had experienced in Africa, a cutting wind blowing off the Southern Ocean. This

morning Mosielely, attended by a number of his nobility, came to see me, and others of the tribe, who flocked around my waggons, importunately requested snuff; the appearance of the chief was mild, but not dignified. Siemi, one of his generals, with whom he seemed to be on very intimate terms, was a jolly-looking old warrior with a wall eye, and a face strongly marked with the small-pox; he had killed about twenty men in battle with his own hand, and bore the mark of honour, a line tattooed on his ribs for every man. Mosielely presented me with a bag of sour milk, and requested I would tarry with him a few days for the purpose of trading; I informed him that I was now anxious to push on to the country of the elephants, but would do so on my return. This seemed a great disappointment to his majesty, who was anxious to exchange karosses for guns and ammunition; but I had resolved not to part with my muskets for anything but ivory, which article Mosielely on this particular occasion did not possess.\*

Dr. Livingstone informed me that large game was abundant on all sides to the north of Bakatla, and stated that herds of elephants occasionally visited the territories of the adjoining chiefs, sometimes frequenting a district for half a summer; but that at the present time he was not aware of there being any elephants in the adjacent forests. In the distant and unexplored country beyond Bamangwato, the territory of Sicomy, the natives affirmed that elephants were at all times abundant, and consequently there was a prospect of obtaining ivory in barter for my muskets. This determined me not to tarry in any district, however favourable, for the purpose of hunting

\* The Bakatlas work a great deal in iron, manufacturing various articles, with which they supply the neighbouring tribes, and obtaining their ore from the surrounding mountains. This is smelted in crucibles, and a great deal of the metal is wasted, only the best and purest being preserved. They use a sort of double bellows, consisting of two bags of skin, by which the air is forced through the long tapering tubes of the two horns of the oryx; the person using the bellows squats between the two bags, which he raises and depresses alternately, working one with each hand: their hammer and anvil consist of two stones. Nevertheless their spears, battle-axes, assagais, knives, sewing-needles, &c., are neatly turned out of hand. The men of this tribe also manufacture large bowls, which they cut out of the solid wood, the tool they use for this purpose being a small implement shaped like an adze.

other varieties of game. My host warned me, however, that I should experience considerable difficulty in reaching Bamangwato, since there was no path nor track of any description to guide me; my only chance of getting there seemed to depend on being able to obtain Bechuana guides from Caachy, a subordinate chief of a branch of the Baquaina tribe, then resident at a place called Booby, situated about eighty miles to the north-west of Bakatla. Without these guides it would be almost impossible to proceed, as the supplies of water were few and very far between; the probability, however, was that they would be refused, since it is the invariable policy of African chiefs to prevent all travellers from penetrating beyond their territory.

Bamangwato is distant upwards of two hundred miles north of Bakatla, from which it is separated by rugged and apparently impassable mountain ranges, extensive sandy deserts, and vast and trackless forests. Isaac already began to lose heart, raised a thousand objections to my proceeding to so distant a country, and recommended in preference my hunting in the territory of Sichely, the paramount chief of the Baquainas, about fifty miles north of Bakatla, where he assured me we should find elephants. Perceiving his remonstrances did not avail, and that I was inexorable, he proposed resigning his situation, and was with difficulty prevailed upon by Dr. Livingstone to accompany me farther.

On the 3rd I took leave of my kind friend the Doctor, and started for Bamangwato, accompanied by a large party of the Bakatla men and two Baquainas, who followed me in the hope of obtaining flesh, a report having spread through the tribe that I was a successful hunter. The Bechuanas are extremely fond of flesh, which they consider the only food befitting men; corn and milk the food of women. Being seldom able to obtain large game for themselves, they entertain great respect for those who can kill plenty of venison for them, and they will travel to very great distances to procure it. We proceeded in a westerly course, and held up the lovely valley of Bakatla, through open glades and patches of ancient forests.

I had ridden only a short distance across the valley when I fell in *with a troop of blue wildebeests*, and presently saw

seven majestic buck koodoos standing on the mountain side high above me ; in trying to stalk these I disturbed a troop of graceful pallahs and a herd of zebras, which clattered along the mountain, and spoiled my stalk with the koodoos. To these succeeded a large herd of buffaloes reclining under a clump of mimosa-trees, and securing my horse to a tree I proceeded to stalk in on them, and killed the patriarch of the herd, which, as usual, brought up the rear.

Early on the 4th we continued our march for Booby, a large party of savages still following the waggons. Before proceeding far, the beautiful appearance of the country tempted me to saddle my horses and hunt on the mountains westward of my course. I was accompanied by Isaac, mounted on the Old Grey, and carrying my clumsy Dutch rifle of six to the pound ; two Bechuanas followed us, leading four of my dogs. Having crossed a well-wooded strath and reached a little crystal river, the banks of which were trampled down with the spoor of a great variety of heavy game, but especially of buffalo and rhinoceros, we took up the spoor of a troop of buffaloes. This we followed along a path made by these animals through a neck in the hills ; and emerging from the thicket, beheld, on the other side of a valley which had opened upon us, a herd of about ten huge bull buffaloes. These I attempted to stalk, but was defeated by a large herd of zebras, which, getting our wind, charged past and started them. Ordering the Bechuanas to release the dogs, and spurring Colesberg, which I rode for the first time since the affair with the lioness, I gave chase, and by riding hard obtained two broadside shots at the last bull. He, however, continued his course, but I soon separated him, with two more, from the troop. My rifle being two-grooved, I was unable to load it on horseback, but followed them in the hope of bringing them to bay. In passing through a grove of thorny trees I lost sight of the wounded buffalo, which had turned short and doubled back, a common practice with them when wounded. I had a hard gallop for two miles after the others, riding within five yards of their huge broad sterns, and inhaling their strong bovine smell, which came hot in my face. I expected every minute they would come to bay, and give me time to load ; but this they

did not seem disposed to do. At length, finding I had the speed of them, I increased my pace; and going ahead, placed myself in front of the finest bull, to force him to stand at bay; upon which he instantly charged me with a low roar, very similar to the voice of a lion. Colesberg neatly avoided the charge, and the bull resumed his course. We now came to rocky ground, and found the forest more dense as we proceeded; the buffaloes evidently making for some strong retreat. I managed with much difficulty to hold them in view, following as best I could through thorny thickets. Isaac came some hundred yards behind, and kept shouting to me to drop the pursuit, or I should be killed. At last the buffaloes suddenly pulled up, and stood at bay in a thicket within twenty yards of me. Springing from my horse, I hastily loaded my two-grooved rifle, which I had scarcely completed when Isaac rode up and inquired what had become of the buffaloes, little dreaming that they were standing within twenty yards of him; I answered by pointing my rifle across his horse's nose, and letting fly sharp right and left at my two antagonists. A headlong charge, accompanied by a muffled roar, was the result. In an instant I was round a clump of tangled thorn-trees; but Isaac, by the violence of his efforts to get his horse in motion, lost his balance, and at the same instant, his girths giving way, himself, his saddle, and big Dutch rifle, all came to the ground together, with a heavy crash, right in the path of the infuriated animals. Two of the dogs, which had fortunately joined us at that moment, met them in their charge, and, by diverting their attention, probably saved Isaac from instant destruction. The buffaloes now took up another position in an adjoining thicket; they were both badly wounded, blotches and pools of blood marking the ground where they had stood; the dogs did me good service, and in a few minutes the two noble bulls breathed their last. In dying they repeatedly made a very peculiar, low, deep moan, which I subsequently ascertained the buffalo invariably utters when in the act of expiring.

I was astonished at the size and powerful appearance of these animals; their horns reminded me of the rugged trunk of an oak-tree, and each was upwards of a foot in breadth at



the base, and together effectually protected the skull with a massive and impenetrable shield; descending and spreading out horizontally they completely overshadowed the animal's eyes, imparting to him a look the most ferocious and sinister that can be imagined. Returning to the waggons I bowled over a stag sassayby, and a princely old buck pallah.

Early in the afternoon I despatched men with a pack-horse to bring in the finer of the two buffalo-heads; it was so ponderous that two powerful men could with difficulty raise it from the ground. The Bechuanas who had accompanied me, on hearing of my success, snatched up their shields and assagais, and hastened to secure the flesh, nor did I see any more of them; the two Baquainas remained with me, having entered into a plot with my interpreter to prevent my penetrating to Bamangwato. Isaac did not soon forget his adventure with the buffaloes, and at night over the fire informed my men that I was mad, and that any one who followed me was going headlong to his own destruction.

At an early hour on the 5th I continued my march through a glorious country of hill and dale, throughout which water was abundant. Beautifully wooded hills and mountains stretched away on every side; some of the mountains were particularly grand and majestic, their summits being surrounded by steep precipices and abrupt parapets of rock, the abodes of whole colonies of black-faced baboons, which, astonished to behold such novel intruders upon their domains, leisurely descended the craggy mountain sides for a nearer inspection of our caravan. Having advanced about nine miles, I drew up my waggons on the bank of a rivulet, where the spoor of large game was extremely abundant, and I discovered in the bed of the stream the scaly skin of a manis, which had been recently eaten by some bird of prey. This extraordinary animal, which in its habits partakes of the nature of the hedgehog, is about three feet in length, and covered all over with an impenetrable coat of mail, consisting of large rough scales, about the size and shape of the leaves of an artichoke; these overlap one another in an extraordinary and very beautiful manner; the tail is broad and likewise covered with scales. On being disturbed, the manis rolls

1

2

3



THE BLACK RHINOCEROS GIVING CHASE.

itself into a ball; it is met with throughout the interior of South Africa, but is rare, and very seldom seen.

It was on the 4th of June that for the first time I beheld the rhinoceros; she was a huge white one, and, accompanied by her calf, was standing in a thorny grove. Getting my wind, she set off at top speed through thick thorny bushes, the calf, as is invariably the case, taking the lead, and the mother guiding its course by placing her horn, generally about three feet in length, against its ribs. My horse shied very much at first, alarmed at the strange appearance of Chukuroo, but by a sharp application of spur and jambok I prevailed upon him to follow, and presently, the ground improving, I got alongside, and, firing at the gallop, sent a bullet through her shoulder; she continued her pace with blood streaming from the wound, and very soon reached an impracticable thorny jungle, where I could not follow, and instantly lost her.

Shortly after this I came upon a black bull rhinoceros, which I stalked within twenty yards, when hearing the Borélé advance, and knowing well that a front shot would not prove deadly, I sprang behind a bush; upon which the villain charged, blowing loudly, and chasing me round it. Had his activity been equal to his ugliness my wanderings would have terminated here, but by my superior agility I had the advantage in the turn. After standing a short time eyeing me through the bush, he got a whiff of my wind, which at once alarmed him, and blowing again, and erecting his insignificant yet saucy-looking tail, he wheeled about, leaving me master of the field. There are four varieties of the rhinoceros in South Africa, distinguished amongst the Bechuanas by the names of the borélé or black rhinoceros, the keitloa or two-horned black rhinoceros, the muchocho or common white rhinoceros, and the kobaoba or long-horned white rhinoceros. Both varieties of the black rhinoceros are extremely fierce and dangerous, and rush headlong and unprovoked at any object which attracts their attention. They never become very fat, and their flesh is tough and not much esteemed by the Bechuanas; their food consists almost entirely of the thorny *branches of the wait-a-bit thorns*. Their horns are

much shorter than those of the other varieties, seldom exceeding eighteen inches in length; they are finely polished by constant rubbing against the trees. The skull is remarkably formed, its most striking feature being the tremendous thick ossification in which it ends above the nostrils; and it is on this mass that the horn is supported. The horns are not connected with the skull, being attached merely by the skin, and they may thus be separated from the head by means of a sharp knife. They are hard and perfectly solid throughout, and a fine material for various articles, such as drinking cups, mallets for rifles, handles for turners' tools, &c. &c.—the horn is capable of a very high polish. The eyes of the rhinoceros are small and sparkling, and he does not readily observe the hunter, provided he is to leeward; the skin is extremely thick, and only to be penetrated by bullets hardened with solder. During the day the rhinoceros will be found lying asleep or standing indolently in some retired part of the forest, or under the base of a mountain, sheltered from the power of the sun by some friendly grove of umbrella-topped mimosas; in the evening these animals commence their nightly rambles, and wander over a great extent of country; at night they usually visit the fountains between the hours of nine and twelve, and it is on these occasions that they may be most successfully hunted, and with the least danger. The black rhinoceros is subject to paroxysms of unprovoked fury, often ploughing up the ground for several yards with its horn, and assaulting large bushes in the most violent manner; on these bushes they work for hours with their horns, at the same time snorting and blowing loudly, nor do they leave them in general until they have broken them to pieces. The rhinoceros is supposed by many, and by me among the rest, to be the animal alluded to by Job, chap. xxxix. verses 10 and 11, where it is written, "Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust him because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?" evidently alluding to an animal possessed of great strength and of untameable disposition, for both of which the rhinoceros is remarkable. They delight to roll and wallow in mud, with

which their rugged hides are generally encrusted. Both varieties of the black rhinoceros are much smaller and more active than the white, and are so swift that a horse with a rider on his back can rarely overtake them. The two varieties of the white rhinoceros are so similar in habits, that the description of one will serve for both; the principal difference consisting in the length and set of the anterior horn; that of the muchocho averaging from two to three feet in length, and pointing backwards; while the horn of the kobaoba often exceeds four feet in length, and inclines forward from the nose at an angle of  $45^{\circ}$ —the posterior horn of either species seldom exceeds six or seven inches in length. The kobaoba is the rarer of the two, and is found very far in the interior, chiefly to the eastward of the Limpopo; its horns are very valuable for making loading rods. Both these varieties of rhinoceros attain an enormous size, being the animals next in magnitude to the elephant; they feed solely on grass, carry much fat, and their flesh is excellent, being preferable to beef: they are of a much milder and more inoffensive disposition than the black rhinoceros, rarely charging their pursuer. Their speed is very inferior to that of the other varieties, and a person well mounted can overtake and shoot them; the head of these is a foot longer than that of the borèlé. They generally carry their heads low, whereas the borèlé, when disturbed, carries his very high, which imparts to him a saucy and independent air. Unlike the elephants, they never associate in herds, but are met with singly or in pairs; in districts where they are abundant, from three to six may be found in company, and I once saw upwards of a dozen congregated together on some young grass, but such an occurrence is rare.

Finding that rhinoceroses were abundant in this vicinity, I resolved to halt a day for the purpose of hunting, and after an early breakfast on the 6th rode south-east with the two Baquainas; they led me along the bases of the mountains, through woody dells and open glades, and we eventually reached a grand forest grey with age—here we found abundance of spoor of the larger game, and started several herds of the more common varieties. At length I observed an old *bull eland standing under a tree*; he was the first I had seen,

and was a noble specimen, standing about six feet high at the shoulder. Observing us, he made off at a gallop, springing over the trunks of decayed trees which lay across his path; but he very soon reduced his pace to a trot. Twice in the thickets I lost sight of him, and he very nearly escaped me; but at length the ground improving, I came up and rode a few yards in his rear. Long streaks of foam now streamed from his mouth, profuse perspiration had changed his sleek grey coat to an ashy blue; tears trickled from his large dark eye, and it was plain that the eland's hours were numbered. Pitching my rifle to my shoulder, I let fly at the gallop, and mortally wounded him behind; then spurring my horse I shot past him on his right side, and discharged my other barrel behind his shoulder, when the eland staggered for a moment and subsided in the dust. This magnificent animal is by far the largest of all the antelope tribe, exceeding a large ox in size. It also attains extraordinary condition, being often burthened with a very large quantity of fat. Its flesh is most excellent, and is justly esteemed above every other; it has a peculiar sweetness, and is tender and fit for use the moment the animal is killed. Like the gemsbok, the eland is independent of water, and frequents the borders of the great Kalahari desert in herds varying from ten to a hundred; it is also generally found throughout all the wooded districts of the interior where I have hunted. Like other varieties of deer and antelope, the old males may often be seen consorting together apart from the females, and a troop of these, when in full condition, may be likened to a herd of stall-fed oxen. The eland has less speed than any other variety of antelope, and by judicious riding may be driven to camp from a great distance; in this manner I have often ridden the best bull out of the herd, and brought him within gunshot of my waggons, where I could more conveniently cut up and preserve the flesh, without the trouble of sending men and pack-oxen to fetch it. I have repeatedly seen an eland drop down dead at the end of a severe chase, owing to his plethoric habit. The skin of the animal I had just shot emitted, like most other antelopes, the most delicious perfume of trees and grass. But to return to my narrative. The

two Baquainas soon made their appearance, delighted at my success, and having kindled a fire roasted some steaks of the eland on the embers: I also cooked one for myself, and having eaten it rode to my waggons. My dogs had a large share of the eland, and assisted me in despatching a white rhinoceros the same afternoon. I had a very narrow escape on this occasion, for the animal finding herself hemmed in near a watercourse turned round to charge, but galloping up on one side, I gave her a bad wound in the shoulder, soon after which she came to bay in the dry bed of a river. Here I dismounted to reload, and before I could do so she was off once more. I followed her, putting on my caps as I rode, and firing at the gallop, sent a ball which entered somewhere near her heart. On receiving this shot she reeled about, torrents of blood streamed from her mouth and wounds, and rolling over she expired, as rhinoceroses invariably do, uttering a shrill screaming sound while in the agonies of death. "

The chase had led me to the northern base of a lofty detached mountain, the highest in all that country, called by the Bechuanas the Mountain of the Eagles. Having rounded it, I had the satisfaction to behold a few vultures soaring over the forest in advance, a certain sign that the eland I had shot in the morning was not far distant; and calling loudly for Carrollus, I was instantly answered by that individual, who, heedless of his master's fate, was actively employed in cooking a choice steak. That night I slept beneath the blue and starry canopy of heaven; my sleep was light and sweet, and no rude dreams or hankering cares disturbed the equanimity of my repose.



## CHAPTER XII.

BOAR-HUNT—CAMELOPARD—NATIVE CONSPIRACY TO PREVENT MY  
FARTHER PROGRESS.

At an early hour on the 7th, having loaded the pack-horse with a burden of flesh and fat, I despatched one of the Baquainas with him to camp. Carollus and I then rode to secure the horn of the muchocho, which with considerable difficulty we separated from the skin by means of a long sharp knife. It was nearly three feet in length, and measured about a foot in diameter at the base. Lions had consumed a large part of the rhinoceros, and sneaked off on hearing us approach, leaving, as is usual, matted locks from their shaggy grey manes sticking on the broken points of the projecting ribs. Returning to camp, I found that Isaac had not been idle in forwarding his own views, and saw at once that my followers had something unusual on their minds, for dismay was depicted on every countenance. I had scarcely seated myself beside the fire when he approached me with a slow funereal step, and asked me if I had heard the news. I replied, What news? when he stated that, on the preceding evening, two men from the Bamangwato country had passed my waggons on their way to Bakatla, to warn that tribe of the on-coming of the cruel and warlike Matabili, whose powerful chief, Moselekatse, has been so ably described in the pages of my fellow-sportsman Captain Harris. These men said that the Matabili had a few days previously attacked and plundered various Bechuana tribes to the northward, and were now advancing by rapid marches to devastate the country and murder the inhabitants.

This I at once knew to be a fabrication, intended to prevent my penetrating farther, and, laughing at Isaac, told him he had dreamed it; to which he replied, "Yes, you will not listen to my advice, when you are warned of danger, but both you and your men will one day acknowledge the truth of my

forebodings." I had considerable difficulty in calming the minds of my followers, and prevailing on them to proceed farther with me.

In the afternoon we continued our journey to the northward, through beautifully wooded hills and valleys, captivating to the sportsman's eye, with rivulets of crystal waters in the valleys and the spoor of large game very abundant. On the march my dogs dashed up the wind, and in two minutes the peaceful forest was disturbed by their united voices, angrily barking around some animal which they had brought to bay. Snatching up my rifle, I rushed to the scene of conflict, and found them baying a fierce and grisly boar, whose foaming jaws were adorned with a pair of tusks, each of them upwards of a foot in length. Owing to the eagerness of my dogs, it was some time before I could obtain a clear shot, but at length an opening occurred, when I dropped the grim boar with a bullet in the heart. Night had scarcely set in when lions began to roar in concert on every side of us, and continued their deep and awful music until the sun rose.

On the 8th we made a short march before breakfast, and in the afternoon resumed it, a bull buffalo falling to my rifle towards evening.

On the 9th we continued our route through a lovely and romantic country, steering for Sesetabie, an extremely bold and picturesque pass, in the lofty mountains in which the Kouloubeng, or "river of wild boars," a tributary to the Ngotwani, takes its rise.

Having breakfasted, I went out on foot with Isaac, and ascended a lofty mountain range to the westward of the pass, where I fell in with large colonies of baboons and a few klip-springers, and also saw for the first time green parrots and grey squirrels. A number of interesting birds, possessing melodious voices, and plumage more or less gaudy, adorned the groves and forests since I had crossed the range of the Kurrichane mountains; but throughout my career in the interior my attention was necessarily so taken up with the pursuit of larger, and to me more interesting, objects of the chase, I could rarely bestow upon the feathered creation *more than a short and passing glance* of admiration. Having

ascended to the summit of the highest mountain of the chain, I obtained a glorious view of the surrounding country; it was truly a fair and boundless prospect; beautifully wooded plains and mountains stretched away on every side until distance was lost among the faint blue outlines of the mountain-range. Throughout all this country, and vast tracts beyond it, I had the satisfaction to reflect that a never-ending succession of herds of every species of noble game which the hunter could desire pastured there in undisturbed security; and as I gazed, I felt that it was all my own, and that I at length possessed the undisputed sway over a forest, in comparison with which the most extensive moor and mountain tracts of the wealthiest European sportsman sink into utter insignificance.

Our next march brought us to the bold mountain-pass of Seseetabie, and wending our way along the margin of the stream, which danced and sparkled down its abrupt and rocky channel, forming a pleasing succession of babbling streams and foaming waterfalls, we advanced farther up the gorge, which became extremely contracted, there being barely sufficient room to admit of the waggons passing between the steep and rocky brink of the stream, and the rugged base of the lofty, inaccessible mountain that towered on our left. On the opposite side, the mountain forming the eastern bulwark of the pass rose suddenly from the water's edge, presenting an impassable barrier. This was a wild and lonely glen, hitherto untrodden, save by the wild denizens of the forests, which from time immemorial had roamed these solitudes: large stones and masses of granite rock obstructed our progress, and several hours were occupied in rolling these to one side before we could venture to bring on the waggons. The rocky way was imprinted with the spoor of the large herd of buffaloes which my followers had that morning disturbed, and before I reached the waggons, which we drew up on a narrow open glade above the junction of the two streams, I killed two of these animals. All night long lions and hyænas prowled around us, and the dogs maintained an incessant barking.

The next morning was cold and windy, and I lay in my waggon longer than usual, my Hottentots having thought

proper to go in quest of honey under the guidance of a garrulous honey-bird. About twenty minutes after they had started I heard the oxen come trotting along in front of the waggons, as if sharply driven, and on raising my head, perceived a lioness following within a few yards of them. The next moment her mate, a venerable-looking lion, with a shaggy mane which swept the ground, appeared in the yellow grass in front of the oxen, waiting for her to put them to flight, this being the usual manner in which the lion attacks buffaloes. Fortunately the oxen would not run, and the lions seemed surprised at the confidence of their game. Springing to my feet and shouting to them, they joined one another, and stood together beneath a shady tree within a hundred and twenty yards of the waggons. The horses were pasturing at a short distance from the lions, feeding towards me, and on them they now seemed to meditate an attack, their attention being divided between the horses and myself. Snatching up my two-grooved rifle, I at once ran forward under cover of a convenient bushy tree within seventy yards of the lions, in which a forked branch afforded an admirable rest. I placed my rifle in it, and, taking the old lion low, let fly, hitting him in the shoulder; the two then wheeled about, and, bounding forward with angry growls, disappeared among the trees.

Having been perfectly cool when I fired, and the forked branch affording a steady aim, I felt convinced that the lion, if not dead, must be mortally wounded, but I prudently resolved not to proceed in quest of him alone. Presently some of my men returned with the dogs; and, having informed them of what had happened, we proceeded to take up the spoor of the wounded monarch of the forest. On reaching the spot where the lions had stood, my dogs barked angrily, looking sharply around in every direction, their hair bristling on their backs. Here we discovered blood, which increased as I proceeded from small red drops to large frothy blotches; and on approaching a dense green bush, two hundred yards farther, my dogs, which led the way, sprang suddenly to one side, barking with great vehemence. By this I knew that the monarch was dead, and, cautiously rounding the bush, had the *satisfaction to behold a princely lion stretched lifeless on*

the ground. He was in the prime of life, having fine sharp teeth, and it being now the dead of winter, he carried a most luxuriant coat of hair, the rankness of his flowing mane exceeding in beauty anything I had hitherto seen; I considered myself extremely fortunate in having secured so noble a specimen of this animal with so little danger, and immediately set men to work to unrobe him, which they were not long in accomplishing.

About midday we inspanned, and trekked on till sundown through a country the most wild and primitive that can be conceived, under the guidance of two Bechuanas, who had joined us on the preceding day, and were proceeding to Booby. The two Baquainas who accompanied me from Bakatla had forsaken my standard after I shot the bull eland, so liberal a supply of flesh being far too powerful a temptation to admit of their leaving it behind them. On gaining the neck of the mountain-pass of Sesetabie, our march for a few miles wound through beautifully-wooded grassy hills, and after this descended into a rugged and densely-wooded valley, intersected with deep watercourses which threatened momentarily the destruction of my axletrees: so dense was the jungle that we were obliged repeatedly to halt the waggons, and cut a pathway with our axes before we could advance. Emerging from this valley, we entered upon a more level country, still, however, densely covered with forest-trees and bushes in endless variety: here water was very abundant. We crossed several streams and marshes, the margins of which were the spoor of wild animals, that of rhinoceros, buffalo, and camelpard being most abundant—at one stream the fresh spoor of a troop of lions was deeply imprinted in the wet sand.

Although I am now acquainted with the native names of a number of the trees of the African forests, yet of the scientific ones I am utterly ignorant. The shoulders and upper ridges of the mountains are profusely adorned with the graceful sandal-wood tree, famed on account of the delicious perfume of its timber: the leaf of this tree emits at every season of the year a powerful and fragrant perfume, which is increased by bruising it in the hand. The foliage is small, of a light silvery grey colour, and contrasts strongly with the dark and

dense evergreen of the moopooroo tree, which also adorns the mountain-ranges. This beautiful tree is interesting, as producing the most delicious and serviceable fruit I met with in those distant parts; it continues in season several months, and the poorer natives subsist upon it: the moopooroo is of the size and shape of a very large olive. At first green, but gradually ripening, like the Indian mango, it becomes beautifully striped with yellow, and when perfectly ripe its colour is the deepest orange; it is sweet and mealy, similar to the date, and contains a small brown seed. It covers the branches, and when ripe the golden fruit beautifully contrasts with the dark green leaves of the tree which bears it. Besides the moopooroo, a great variety of fruits are met with throughout these mountains and forests, all of which are known to, and gathered by, the natives: I must, however, forego a description of them, as it would swell these pages to undue bounds. Throughout the densely-wooded dells and hollows the rose-wood-tree occurs, of considerable size and in great abundance.

During the night we were beset by a daring troop of hyænas, which, notwithstanding the vigilance of my dogs, consumed a part of my buffalo trektow and also a number of straps from off the yokes. The dogs kept up a loud and incessant barking until the day dawned, when I shot one of the hyænas, the rest made off.

On the 11th we were in the yoke soon after daybreak; it was a bitterly cold morning, ice a quarter of an inch in thickness covering the pools. We were now clear of the extensive mountain-ranges through which our road had wound since leaving Bakatla, and approaching towards the south-eastern limits of the great Kalahari desert, on whose borders Booby is situated. We continued our march, steering north-west; in which direction the distant blue hills, pointed out to me as the position of Booby, shot abruptly above the unvaried sameness of the intervening forest scenery: to the west, one eternal ocean-like expanse of grey forest stretched away in a level and unbroken plain, terminated only by the far horizon. Having performed a march of three hours, we crossed a small stream, where I outspanned to breakfast.

This was to me another memorable day, the first on which

I saw and slew the lofty, graceful-looking giraffe or camelopard, with which, during many years of my life, I had longed to form an acquaintance. These gigantic and exquisitely beautiful animals, admirably formed by nature to adorn the fair forests that clothe the boundless plains, are widely distributed throughout the interior of Southern Africa, but are nowhere to be met with in great numbers. In countries unmolested by the intrusive foot of man, the giraffe is found generally in herds varying from twelve to sixteen; but I have not unfrequently met with thirty, and on one occasion I counted forty individuals together; this, however, was a chance, and sixteen may be reckoned as the average number of a herd. These herds are composed of giraffes of various sizes, from the young one of nine or ten feet in height to the dark chestnut-coloured old bull of the herd, whose exalted head towers above his companions, generally attaining a height of upwards of eighteen feet. The females are of lower stature and more delicately formed than the males, their height averaging from sixteen to seventeen feet. Some writers have discovered ugliness and a want of grace in the giraffe, but I consider that he is one of the most strikingly beautiful animals in the creation; and when a herd is seen scattered through a grove of the picturesque parasol-topped acacias which adorn their native plains, and on whose uppermost shoots they are enabled to browse by the colossal height with which nature has so admirably endowed them, he must indeed be slow of conception who fails to discover both grace and dignity in all their movements. There can be no doubt that every animal is seen to the greatest advantage in the haunts which nature destined him to adorn, and amongst the various living creatures which beautify this fair creation I have often traced a remarkable harmony between the form of animal and the general appearance of the locality in which it is found; this I first remarked at an early period of my life, when entomology occupied a part of my attention. No person following this interesting pursuit can fail to observe the extraordinary likeness which insects bear to the various abodes in which they are met with; thus, among the long green grass we find a variety of long green insects, whose legs and antennæ so resemble the shoots

emanating from the stalks of the grass that it requires a practised eye to distinguish them. In sandy districts varieties are met with of a colour similar to the sand which they inhabit. Among the green leaves of the various trees of the forest innumerable leaf-coloured insects are to be found; while, closely adhering to the rough grey bark of the same trees, we observe beautifully coloured grey-looking moths of various patterns, yet altogether so resembling the bark as to be invisible to the passing observer. In like manner among quadrupeds I have traced a corresponding analogy, for, even in the case of the stupendous elephant, the ashy colour of his hide so corresponds with the general appearance of the grey thorny jungles which he frequents throughout the day, that a person unaccustomed to hunt these animals, standing on a commanding situation, might look down upon a herd and fail to detect their presence. And further, in the case of the giraffe, which is invariably met with among venerable forests, where innumerable blasted and weather-beaten trunks and stems occur, I have repeatedly been in doubt as to the presence of a troop, until I had recourse to my telescope, and on referring to my savage attendants, I have known even their practised eyes deceived, at one time mistaking these dilapidated trunks for camelopards, and again confounding real camelopards with these aged veterans of the forest.

Although we had now been travelling many days through the country of the giraffe, and marched through forests in which their spoor was abundant, our eyes had not yet been gifted with a sight of Tootla himself; it was therefore with indescribable pleasure that, on the evening of the 11th, I beheld a troop of these interesting animals.

Our breakfast being finished, I resumed my journey through an endless grey forest of camel-dorn and other trees, the country slightly undulating and grass abundant. A little before the sun went down my driver remarked to me, "I was just going to say, Sir, that that old tree was a camelopard." Looking where he pointed, I saw that the old tree was indeed a camelopard, and, on casting my eyes a little to the right, I beheld a troop of them standing looking at us, their heads actually *towering above* the trees of the forest. It was im-



prudent to commence a chase at such a late hour, especially in a level country, where the chances were against my being able to regain my waggons that night. However, I resolved to risk everything; and directing my men to catch and saddle Colesberg, hastily buckled on my shooting-belt and spurs, and in two minutes was in the saddle. The giraffes stood looking at the waggons until I was within sixty yards of them, when, galloping round a thick bushy tree, under cover of which I had ridden, I suddenly beheld a sight the most astounding that a sportsman's eye could encounter. Before me stood ten colossal giraffes, the majority of which were from seventeen to eighteen feet high, but beholding me they at once made off, twisting their long tails over their backs with a loud switching noise, and cantering along at an easy pace, which, however, obliged Colesberg to put his best foot foremost to keep up with them.

My sensations on this occasion were different from anything that I had before experienced during a long sporting career, and I was so absorbed by the wondrous and beautiful sight before me that I rode along like one entranced, and felt inclined to disbelieve that I was hunting living things of this world. The ground was firm and favourable for riding, at every stride I gained upon the giraffes, and after a short burst at a swingeing gallop was in the middle of them, and turned the finest cow out of the herd; finding herself driven from her comrades and hotly pursued, she increased her pace, and cantered along with tremendous strides, clearing an amazing extent of ground at every bound, while her neck and breast, coming in contact with the dead old branches of the trees, were continually strewing them in my path. In a few minutes I was riding within five yards of her stern, and, firing at the gallop, sent a bullet into her back; increasing my pace, I next rode alongside, and, placing the muzzle of my rifle within a few feet of her, fired my second shot behind the shoulder—the ball, however, seemed to have little effect. I then placed myself directly in front, when she came to a walk, and dismounting, I hastily loaded both barrels, putting in a double charge of powder; but before I was ready she was off at a canter. In a short time I brought her to a stand at

fifteen yards in the dry bed of a watercourse, and fired, aiming where I thought the heart lay, upon which she again started; having reloaded, I followed, and had very nearly lost her, for she turned abruptly to the left, and was far out of sight among the trees. Once more I brought her to a stand, and dismounting, gazed in wonder at her extreme beauty, while her soft dark eye, with its silky fringe, looked down imploringly at me: I really felt a pang of sorrow in this moment of triumph for the blood I was shedding; but the sporting feeling prevailed, and pointing my rifle towards the skies, I sent a bullet through her neck. On receiving it, she reared high on her hind legs and fell backwards with a heavy crash, making the earth shake around her—a thick stream of dark blood spouted far from the wound, her colossal limbs quivered for a moment, and she expired.

I had little time to contemplate the prize I had won, night was fast setting in, and it was very questionable whether I should succeed in regaining my camp; so, having cut off the tail of the giraffe, which was adorned with a bushy tuft of flowing black hair, I took “one last fond look,” and rode hard for the spoor of the waggons, which I reached just as it fell dark.

No pen nor words can convey to a sportsman what it is to ride in the midst of a troop of gigantic giraffes: it must be experienced to be understood; they emitted a powerful perfume, which in the run came hot in my face, reminding me of the smell of a hive of heather honey in September. The greater part of this chace led through bushes of wait-a-bit thorn of the most effective description, and my legs and arms were covered with blood long before I had finished the giraffe; I rode as usual in the kilt with my arms bare to the shoulder—it was Chapelpark of Badenoch’s old grey kilt, but in this gallop it received its death-blow.

On the 12th we made two long marches through thickly wooded plains, the spoor of camelopard being extremely abundant, and on the 13th cast loose the cattle at dawn of day. Breakfast being finished, we inspanned, and having proceeded about eight miles through the forest, steering for a range of rocky mountains, reached a gorge in the same,

crossed a small river, and having followed its banks about three miles, arrived at Booby, a village of Bechuanas, a branch of the tribe of the Baquainas, governed by a subordinate chief, who was then absent on a visit. I was, however, welcomed by his nephew, Caachy, a man of pleasing exterior and prepossessing manners, who shortly afterwards became, and now is, chief of that tribe.

As the manner in which Caachy succeeded to the chieftainship was peculiar, I may here relate the circumstances attending it. Throughout all the Bechuana tribes an absurd belief prevails in witchcraft and supernatural agencies of every kind; they also believe that for every transaction there is a medicine which will enable the possessor to succeed in his object. Thus they think those who work in iron, do so under the power of medicine; their rainmakers by the power of their medicines can propitiate the friendly clouds during the protracted droughts of summer; and they have medicines to protect them from the lightning's stroke, the deadly bite of the viper, and the fatal spring of the lion. They further believe that there is a medicine for guns, the possession of which will cause the gun to shoot well; and likewise one for gunpowder, which will give it strength.

During my stay at Booby I obtained from the natives some interesting specimens of arms and other curiosities, in exchange for which they required gunpowder, their chief having in his possession one or two muskets. When he and his men first used my powder, they missed all they fired at; the Bechuana mode of firing being to withdraw the face from the gun, from a natural impulse of fear before drawing the trigger, and to look back over the left shoulder, instead of at the animal they expect to kill. The cause of their ill-success they at once ascribed to the powder, which they affirmed required medicine; accordingly, the chief and all the long-headed men in Booby assembled, and having placed the unworthy gunpowder upon a large kaross, sat round it, and commenced a variety of ceremonies and incantations with a view of imparting to it that power which they considered it had lost. At length some wiseacre among the soothsayers *informed the king* that the presence of fire was indispensable

on the occasion. Fire was accordingly introduced along with the other medicines, and a censer of hot embers was passed frequently over the powder. Suddenly, however, an unlucky spark fell upon the heap, which of course instantly exploded, and the quantity being very considerable, the Booby men and their chief were blown heels over head on every side—several of the party, and among others the chief, being so severely burnt, that they shortly died. So much for Bechuana medicines.

The kraal of Booby is encompassed on three sides by rocky hills, which to their summits are densely clad with sandal-wood trees; these hills are in parts extremely precipitous, and the abode of baboons and klipspringers. As we approached Booby, I took my rifle and ascended to the base of one of these precipices, where I shot two immense baboons; one of them was sitting on the shelf of a rock very high above me; and on receiving the ball he fell about a hundred feet without a break. The valleys between the mountains are extensively cultivated by the women, as also a large level piece of ground to the north-east of the kraal. The costume of this tribe is the same I have already described as worn by the Bechuanas; but I remarked that they used the atrocious mixture of red clay and grease more freely than their neighbours. The Booby men flocked around my waggons, evidently much gratified with so novel a sight, and continued with me until nightfall. Shortly after I reached Booby a party of Baquainas arrived from Sichely; they had been sent to endeavour to dissuade me from visiting Bamangwato, and to inform me that Sichely had ivory and karosses, with which to purchase all my guns; and, above all, wished me to promise to reserve my big Dutch rifle for him. I informed these men that I was determined to visit Sicomy, but that I would keep the Dutch rifle for their chief, as he requested it.

Having informed Caachy I intended to march next day, he expressed surprise, and said I made his heart sore, and that evening there was a meeting of all the wise men in Booby to consult how I could best be prevented from journeying on to Bamangwato. In the morning I felt far from well, probably *having drunk too much of Caachy's beer on the preceding*

evening, and before I was inclined to turn out, the regent and all his great men were standing thick around my waggons. I pretended to be asleep, so they kindled fires, by which they squatted, till I arose and gave the chief his breakfast, during which I told him that I wished him to send some men with me to Bamangwato, and to this he replied that there was war in that country, and that he was afraid of Moselekatse. I then said, that, though he would not give me men, I possessed medicine which would enable me to discover the way without his assistance; and informed him that, if he persisted in his refusal, I should tell Sicomy, the great and paramount chief of Bamangwato, that he endeavoured to prevent white men from visiting his domains. Upon this Caachy altered his tune, and said that four men should accompany and return with me.

This being arranged, I gave him some presents, and requested him to take charge of my buffalo and other heads until my return, which he promised to do, and ordered men to bear them directly to his kraal. About midday we left Booby, accompanied by nearly the whole tribe, every man carrying two or three assagais and a battle-axe; they followed us in the hope that I would shoot large game for them. The guides at first held north-east, but presently drawing off that course, and steering due east, I halted, and said that was not the road to Bamangwato, when they replied, they held that course on account of water. I then directed them to place an assagai on the ground with its head pointing to Bamangwato. Thereupon the savages laid one down, and, having pretended for some minutes to be discussing among themselves the exact position of that place, they ended by pointing it due east, declaring that Bamangwato lay in that direction. I told them that I had a needle in my pocket rubbed with medicine, by which I could tell if their spear really pointed to Sicomy's country, and knowing that Bamangwato lay a little to the east of north, said that by turning the needle three times round my left wrist it would point a little to the left-hand side of that country. On hearing this the savages looked at one another with surprise, and pressed round me to see if my needle possessed the power I represented. I then pulled out my pocket-compass, and, passing it three times round my left

wrist with the utmost gravity, whistled shrilly; and opening the compass put it on the ground before them. Snatching one of their assagais, I placed it beside the compass a little to the east of north, and told them that it was in that direction Bamangwato lay; at this they were struck with astonishment, and at once considered me as working by supernatural agency.

I now inquired if they would lead me to water in this line of country, but they all shouted it was a desert, and that no man had ever found water there; they then turned right about, and, retreating two hundred yards, squatted on the ground. Isaac and I then approached them, but they remained silent, and looked down. I asked them why they all sat thus, when they answered they would proceed no farther with me. I replied I was happy to hear it, for that I could find the way better without them, and, returning to my waggons, I ordered my men to turn about and retrace their steps to the nearest water. The savages then requested me to halt and speak with them. I told them to go home to their captain, as their presence troubled me; and having proceeded a few hundred yards, encamped beside a pool of water.

It was plain to me that Isaac, my interpreter, was in league with the Baquainas and their regent in their designs against my wishes; but as I did not then intend to part with him, because his presence gave confidence to my people, I deemed it best to pretend that I believed him sincere. My flesh being exhausted, I resolved to halt a day for the purpose of hunting, and having obtained a good supply, steered through the forests by compass a little to the east of north, to search for water with my horses in advance of the waggons. I felt poorly in health, and was much troubled in mind. My situation was by no means an enviable one; I was far in the interior of Africa, alone and friendless, surrounded by a tribe of men who would do anything short of violence to prevent my attaining my object. What I most dreaded was their stealing my oxen or horses, which they could easily have done; my men also were faint-hearted and anxious to return homewards.

That night I slept little, from vexation and anxiety. The whole tribe of Booby men lay on the ground around a number of fires, with a hedge of thorny bushes placed in a

semicircle to windward of each party. After breakfast I rode east to hunt, accompanied by Kleinboy leading a packhorse, and about thirty of the Bechuanas followed us in the hope of flesh. Having proceeded about two miles, I shot a bull and two fat cow wildebeests; I presented the bull and one of the cows to the Bechuanas, who were delighted with my success, and, having placed the remaining cow upon my packhorse, we returned to camp.

Here I found Caachy with all his retinue, who thanked me for the game, when I informed him that his men did not lead me as Dr. Livingstone had told me to ride; to which he replied that the road was circuitous, and that they led me so on account of water. At length he had almost persuaded me to follow his guides, but as I had no friend to consult, I resolved to wait there that night and determine finally in the morning. Caachy then drank coffee with me and departed. In the evening I inquired of the guides concerning the waters and the distances betwixt them; they replied that the first supply was a moderate day's journey, but after that I must ride more than two days without any, and also persevered in pointing to the east as my course. I was now convinced that their intention was to lead me astray, and finally bring me to Sichely, and therefore resolved to adhere to my first resolution of steering my own course by compass, but I kept this intention secret, fearing they might steal some of my oxen. -

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE GUIDES TRY TO MISLEAD ME—WANDERING BECHUANAS POINT OUT  
MY RIGHT COURSE—LOST IN THE FOREST.

ON the morning of the 16th a large party of Caachy's men were still encamped beside us, probably under the impression that they had succeeded in prevailing upon me to follow them. Having filled all my water-casks, I ordered my men to inspan, the Bechuanas cracking their jokes and fancying I should ride east as they led; but to their astonishment, when the team was ready, I told them they had better all return to their captains, as I would shoot no more game for them, and then ordered my men to ride for a conspicuous tree in the distance, bearing N.N.E. The Bechuanas sat still for some time, but presently shouldered their assagais and followed in our wake. This was a bold step on my part; the country looked very unlikely for water, and the savages still protested there was none for seven days' journey in the course I determined to hold; it lay through a boundless forest, with no hill nor landmark to give me an idea where to search for water. Fortune, however, favoured me as usual, for if I had lived all my life in the country I could not have taken a more direct line for the spot I wished to reach, though some miles were passed without a gleam of hope, the view from a rising ground exhibiting one slightly undulating, ocean-like expanse of forest and dense thorny jungles.

We nevertheless held on, steering N.N.E. by compass, when all the Bechuanas forsook me except four ill-favoured men whom Caachy had given me as guides; these, contrary to my expectations, followed in our wake at some distance. After travelling for several hours, compass in hand, the country became more open, and we presently entered upon a wide tract that had been recently desolated by the Bakalahari, or wild inhabitants of the desert. The trees and bushes stood



scorched and burnt, and there was not a blade of grass to cheer the eye—blackness and ashes stretched away on every side wherever I turned my anxious glance. I felt my heart sink within me as I beheld in dim perspective my famished and thirsty oxen returning some days hence over this hopeless desert, all my endeavours to find water having failed, and all my bright hopes of elephant-hunting ending in bitter disappointment—it was indeed a cheerless prospect. I had no friend to comfort or advise me, and could hear my men behind me grumbling, and swearing that they would return home, while the guides asked them why they followed me to destruction.

At length we reached the farther side of this dreary waste of ashes, but an equally cheerless prospect was before us. We entered a vast forest, grey with extreme age, and so thick that we could not see forty yards in advance, being obliged occasionally to halt the waggons and cut down trees and branches to admit of their passing. To make matters still worse, the country had become extremely heavy, the waggons sinking deep in soft sand, and my men began to show a mutinous spirit, expressing their opinions aloud in my presence. I remonstrated with them, and told them that, if I did not bring them to water next day before the sun was under, they might turn the oxen on their spoor. We continued our march through this dense forest until nightfall, when I halted beside a wide-spreading tree, cast the cattle loose for an hour, and secured them on the yokes by moonlight.

I felt very sad and unhappy, for I considered the chances were against me, and I loathed the idea of returning to the colony, after coming so very far, without shooting or even seeing what my heart most ardently desired, viz. a wild bull elephant free in his native jungle. However I took some wine, and, coming to the fire which the men had kindled beneath an old camel-dorn tree, affected great cheerfulness and contentment, and, laughing at the four Bechuanas, told them that I was no child that they should lead me astray, but an old warrior and a cunning hunter, who could find his way in strange lands. I laughed, but it was the laugh of despair, for I expected that next evening they would, on seeing me

compelled to retrace my steps, be laughing at me. One of the greatest difficulties that presented itself was, that, if I rode in advance to search for water, it would be almost impossible to find my way back to the waggons through that vast and trackless forest. I went to bed, but tried in vain to sleep; care and anxiety kept me awake until a little before morning, when I dozed for a short time and dreamt that I had ridden in advance and found water. Day dawned, but I awoke in sorrow; my hopes were like a flickering flame. Having breakfasted I directed my men to give the Cow and Colesberg some corn, ordering my people to remain quiet during the day and listen for shots, lest I should lose my way in returning, and having given them ammunition to reply, I saddled up and held N.N.E. through thick forest, accompanied by Kleinboy. The ground was heavy, being soft sand, and the grass grew at intervals in detached bunches. We rode on without a break or a change, and found no spoor of wild animals to give me hope: I saw one duiker, but these antelopes are met with in the desert, and are independent of water.

At last we reached a more open part of the forest, and emerging from the thicket perceived a troop of six or eight beautiful giraffes standing looking at us about two hundred yards to my right; but this was no time to give them chase, which I felt very much inclined to do, so I allowed them to depart in peace, and continued my search for water. In this open glade I found two or three vleys that had once contained a little, but they were now hard and dry, and re-entering the dense forest we held one point more to the east. For miles we continued our search, until my hopes sank to a very low ebb, and Kleinboy swore we should never regain the waggons. At length I perceived a sassayby in front of me: this antelope drinks every day;—"fresh vigour with the hope returned." I once more pressed forward and cantered along, heedless of the distance which already intervened between me and my camp and the remonstrances of my attendant, who at last reined up his jaded steed, and said that he would not follow me farther to my own destruction. I then pointed to the top of a distant grey tree that stretched its bare and

weather-beaten branches above the heads of its surrounding comrades, and said that, if we saw nothing to give us hope when we reached that tree, I would abandon the search, and hunt during that season in Sichely's mountains to the east of Booby.

But fate had ordained that I should penetrate farther into the interior of Africa; and before I reached the old grey tree I observed a small flight of Namaqua partridges crossing my path in a westerly direction. It was impossible to tell, until I should see a second flock of these, flying at a different angle, whether the first flock had come from, or were going to, water; for this I accordingly watched, nor watched long in vain. A considerable distance ahead of me I detected a second flight of these birds likewise flying westerly; and it was evident, from their inclination, that they held for the same point as the first had done. Shortly afterwards the first flight returned, flying high above our heads, uttering their soft melodious cry of "pretty dear, pretty dear." I then rode in the direction from which the birds had come, and before proceeding far we discovered a slight hollow running north and south; this I determined to follow, and presently discovered fresh spoor of a rhinoceros, a certain sign that water was not very distant.

Once more my dying hopes revived, and I looked north at the sky, which on this particular day was quite different from anything I had beheld for months. It was like one of those glorious days when the bright blue firmament in my own dark land is seen through ten thousand joyous fleecy clouds, and all nature seems to strive in its sunny hour to make poor unhappy man forget his cares and sorrows; I took it as a favourable omen, and, stirring my good but weary steed, cantered along the glade. The hollow took a turn, on rounding which I perceived that I was in an elevated part of the forest; and, for the first time, I obtained a distant view of the surrounding scenery. Far as the eye could strain it was all forest without a break; but it was now an undulating country before me, instead of the hopeless level through which I had come—I felt certain of success. We soon discovered vleys that had recently contained water; and at last found a large

pool, enough to supply my cattle for several days. This was indeed a glad moment—a grand step towards attaining my object, for as my difficulties had seemed to increase, my wish and determination to overcome them had become stronger; I knew that, whether I reached Bamangwato or not, if I could now only manage to travel north about eight days' journey I should fall in with elephants.

Regaining my waggons, which I did without a turn in my course, I at first pretended not to have discovered water, and said to the guides, "There is nothing but dense wood in this country; can you not show me water? my oxen will die." They replied that if I wanted water I must travel till sunset, steering south of east, and were amazed when I said, "Now I am certain you wish to lead me astray; for I have seen abundance of water, and I will find my way to Bamangwato, though you do all in your power to prevent me." Having inspanned, we held for the water, which I reached at a late hour, the Bechuanas still following in our wake. It appeared to me that the orders they had received from their chief were, to endeavour to lead me astray, and take me to Sichely; but in the event of my finding the way to Bamangwato myself, they were to accompany me to Sicomy to insure his friendship and convince him of their chief's sincerity. On the morning of the 18th, while lying in my waggon, undecided whether I should hunt or explore the country in advance, I heard the voices of men a little distance down the glade, and springing from my bed discovered a party of Bechuanas. These men had been hunting jackals at a place called Boötlonamy, halfway from Booby to Bamangwato, and they, at my request, at once pointed out to me my correct line of route for the latter place, and the position of a fine vley in the forest one march in advance.

Having breakfasted, I inspanned, and after trekking for about six hours through dense forest we reached the vley; on the march it was necessary to have constant recourse to our axes to clear a path for the waggons. I was much delighted with the little round loch; it covered about an acre, and the margin was imprinted with the fresh spoor of the giraffe, rhinoceros, buffalo, sassayby, pallah, zebra, lion, &c. We

encamped beneath two wide-spreading shady trees, and I at once saddled up, and rode forth with Kleinboy to hunt, our flesh being at an end. I had ridden about half a mile in a north-easterly course, through shady groves of mokala-trees, when suddenly I observed a stately giraffe walk slowly across my path, and crop the leaves from the upper branches of one of them about a hundred yards in advance. This was a fine look-out; with hasty hand I shifted my saddle from Sunday to the Old Grey, and ordering Kleinboy to put the pack-saddle on Sunday, and listen for shots, I rode slowly towards the giraffe. As I advanced, I perceived another standing a little on my left looking at me, and on rounding an intervening clump of trees came full in sight of a troop of eight giraffes cantering before me. In another minute I was in the middle of them; and selecting a fine fat cow, rode hard at her, and fired my first shot at the gallop, which took effect. Again and again I broke her from the troop, and again she joined them; at length I fired my second barrel at her stern; after which, by heading her, I brought her to a stand, and hastily loading both barrels, fired right and left for her heart. Her colossal frame shook convulsively for a few seconds, when, tottering forward, she subsided in the dust with tremendous violence.

Four signal-shots brought Kleinboy and the packhorse, and also Isaac with the four guides; the chace was all in thick forest, and had led me to within a few hundred yards of the waggons. The hungry guides, enchanted at the prospect of such a banquet, at once kindled a fire, and slept that night beside the carcass, while I returned to the waggons with my horses laden with flesh. My mind being now once more at rest, I went to bed and slept soundly. During the night lions roared around us.

On the 19th strolling through the forest I found some old dung of elephants; and observed several full-grown trees torn up by the roots or shivered by the gigantic strength of those animals. The guides, finding they prevailed nothing, at length volunteered to lead me to Bamangwato by a northerly route, and promised that I should not lack water; we accordingly inspanned, and held on till sundown, proceeding

in a north-easterly course, when we halted in dense forest without water. Our march lay through an interesting country well adapted for hunting the eland and giraffe; the forest was in many places thin and open, with here and there gigantic old trees of picturesque appearance, some half-dead, and others falling to pieces from age. The soil, soft yet firm, was admirably suited for riding, and the spoor of eland and giraffe abundant.

On the 20th we inspanned, and having proceeded about five miles reached a miserable little kraal or village of Bakalahari. Here was a vley of water, beside which we outspanned, and in its vicinity were a few small gardens, containing water-melons and a little corn. Starvation was written in the faces of these inhabitants of the forest. Occasionally they have the luck to capture some large animal in a pitfall, when for a season they live in plenty; but as they do not possess salt, the flesh soon spoils, when they are compelled once more to roam the forest in quest of fruits and roots, on which, with locusts, they in a great measure subsist. In districts where game is abundant, they construct their pits on a large scale, and erect hedges in the form of a crescent, extending nearly a mile on either side of the pit, and by this means the game may be easily driven into the pitfalls, which are carefully covered over with thin sticks and dry grass; thus whole herds of zebras and wildebeests are taken at once, and the capture is followed by the most disgusting banquets, the poor famished savages gorging and surfeiting in a manner worthy only of the vulture or hyæna. They possess no cattle, and if they did, the nearest chief would immediately take them. All this part of the country abounded with the pitfalls made by the Bakalahari; many of these had been dug expressly for the giraffe, and were generally three feet wide, and ten long; their depth was from nine to ten feet.

At midday we resumed our march through dense forest, and were obliged to cut a way with our axes, halting at sunset without water—the spoor of eland was abundant.

On the 22nd, ordering my men to move on to the fountain of Boötlonamy, I rode forth with Ruyter, and held east through a grove of lofty wide-spreading mimosas, most of which were

more or less damaged by the gigantic strength of a troop of elephants, which had passed there about twelve months before. Having proceeded about two miles with large herds of game on every side, I came upon a black rhinoceros feeding on some wait-a-bit thorns within fifty yards of me. I fired from the saddle, and sent a bullet in behind his shoulder, when he rushed forward about one hundred yards in tremendous consternation, blowing like a grampus, and then stood looking about him. Presently he made off, and I followed; the chase led through a large herd of blue wildebeests, zebras, and springboks, which gazed at us in utter amazement as we passed. I expected in my ignorance that he would come to bay, which a rhinoceros never does. Suddenly he fell flat on his broadside to the ground, but, recovering his feet, resumed his course as if nothing had happened. Becoming annoyed at the length of the chase, for I wished to keep my horses fresh for the elephants, and being indifferent whether I got the rhinoceros or not, as I observed his horn was completely worn down with age and the violence of his disposition, I determined to bring matters to a crisis; so, spurring my horse, I dashed ahead, and rode right in his path. Upon this the hideous monster charged me in the most resolute manner, blowing loudly through his nostrils; and although I quickly wheeled about, he followed me at such a furious pace for several hundred yards, with his horrid horny snout within a few yards of my horse's tail, that my little Bushman, who was looking on in great alarm, thought his master's destruction inevitable. The animal, however, suddenly turned about, and I, being perfectly satisfied with the interview I had already enjoyed with him, had no desire to cultivate his acquaintance any further, and accordingly made for camp. We left the fountain of Boötlonamy the same day, and trekked about six miles. At night large flocks of guinea-fowls roosted in the trees around our encampment, several of which I shot for my supper.

On the 23rd we were spanned by moonlight, and continued our march through a thinly-wooded level country. Having proceeded about ten miles, it became thickly covered with detached forest-trees and groves of wait-a-bit thorns. The

guides now informed us that the water, which is called by the Bechuanas Lepeby, was only a short distance in advance; upon which I rode ahead with the Bushman, intending to hunt for an hour before breakfast. The game increased as we proceeded, until the whole forest seemed alive with zebras, pallahs, springboks, wildebeests, and rhinoceros. I might have killed any quantity of game if venison had been my object; but I was trying to get a few very superior heads of some of the master-bucks of the pallahs, and in the dust and confusion caused by the innumerable quantity of game I managed to lose all I wounded.

We had now come many miles, and feeling faint from want of food, I dropped the chace in disgust, and continued my course as I thought in the direction of the waggons; but as evening drew near I began to have my suspicions that the Bushman, in whom on such occasions I placed the most implicit confidence, had lost his way. This proved to be the case, and after having ridden some miles farther he acknowledged that he knew nothing at all about the matter, but stated it to be his impression that we ought to bear farther to the west. My head was so confused that I lost all recollection of how we had come, and felt at my wits' end, I knew not what. To find the waggons was comparatively a trifle, for the pangs of thirst began to seize me; I had ridden all day, under a burning sun, and had neither eaten nor drunk since the preceding evening; my heart sank as horrible visions of a lingering death by maddening thirst arose before me. Dismounting, I sat down to think what I should do; I knew exactly by compass the course we had been steering since we left Booby, and after considering well, remounted my horse, which was also half dead with thirst and fatigue, and rode south-west for several miles. At length I recognised the country we had passed through in the early morning, and eventually, to my inexpressible gratification, we discovered the spoor of the waggons, and reached them after following it for about four miles in a north-easterly direction. Thankful indeed I felt to see them again. They were drawn up beside the strong fountain of Lepeby, which, issuing from beneath a stratum of white tuffous rock, formed a deep and extensive pool of pure water.



adorned on one side with lofty green reeds. This fountain was situated at the northern extremity of a level bare vley, surrounded by dense covers of wait-a-bit thorns; and such a peculiar sameness characterised the country, that a person wandering only a few hundred yards from the fountain would have considerable difficulty in regaining it; it was night before I reached the waggons, and two or three cups of coffee soon restored me to my wonted vigour.

On the following morning, from earliest dawn until we trekked, which we did about ten A.M., large herds of game kept pouring in to drink from every side, completely covering the open space, and imparting to it the appearance of a cattle-fair; blue wildebeests, zebras, sassaybys, pallahs, springboks, &c., capered fearlessly up to the water, troop after troop, within two hundred yards of us. I shot a pallah and a wildebeest, which we secured behind the waggons. In former years some Bechuanas had frequented this fountain, but the powerful and cruel Matabili had attacked the tribe, and driven them to seek a home elsewhere. About ten A.M. we inspanned, and within a mile of Lepeby passed through another similar open vley, containing a strong fountain of delicious water. We continued our march till sundown through an undulating open country, thinly covered with detached trees and thorny bushes, and encamped in a sandy desert without water.

## CHAPTER XIV.

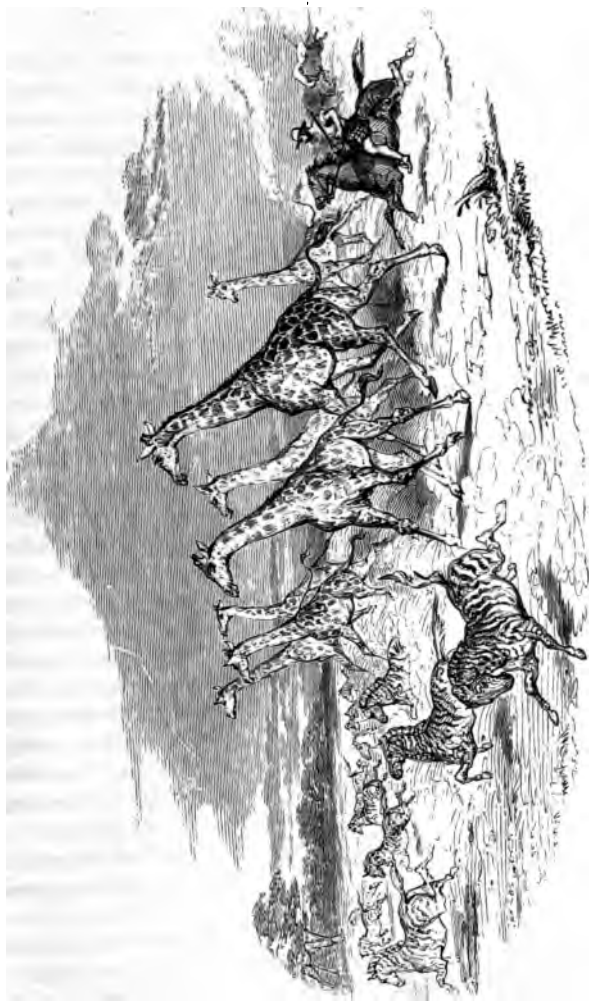
BAMANGWATO MOUNTAINS—GIRAFFES—ELEPHANT-HUNT—SICOMY,  
KING OF BAMANGWATO.

On the 25th we trekked about five hours in a north-easterly course, through an open country, sparingly adorned with dwarfish old trees, and in the distance the long-sought mountains of Bamangwato at length loomed blue before us. We halted beside a glorious fountain, which at once made me forget all the cares and difficulties I had encountered in reaching it. The name of this fountain was Massoney, but I at once christened it "the Elephant's own Fountain," for it was on the southern borders of endless forests inhabited by that animal, at which I had at length arrived. The spring, deep and strong, was situated at the eastern extremity of an extensive open vley, in a level stratum of old red sandstone, and here and there was a thick layer of soil upon it, covered with the fresh spoor of elephants; the very rock around the water's edge being worn down by the gigantic feet which for ages had trodden there.

The soil of the surrounding country was white and yellow sand, but grass, trees, and bushes were abundant. From the borders of the fountain a hundred well-beaten elephant foot-paths led away in every direction, like the radii of a circle; the breadth of these paths was about three feet, and those leading to the north and east were the most frequented, the country in those directions being well wooded. We drew up the waggons on a hillock on the eastern side of the water; for this position commanded a good view of any game that might approach to drink. I had just cooked and commenced my breakfast when my men exclaimed, "Almagtig keek de ghroote clomp cameel;" and, raising my eyes from my sassyby stew, I beheld a magnificent sight. Up the middle of the vley stalked a troop of ten colossal giraffes, flanked

by two large herds of blue wildebeests and zebras, with an advanced guard of pallahs. They were all coming to the fountain to drink, and would be within rifle-shot of the waggons before I could finish my breakfast; but I continued to swallow my food with the utmost expedition, and directed my men to catch and saddle Colesberg. In a few minutes the giraffes were slowly advancing within two hundred yards of me, stretching their graceful necks, and gazing in wonder at the waggons. Grasping my rifle, I mounted my horse and rode slowly forward until I was within one hundred yards of them, when, whisking their long tails over their backs, they made off at an easy canter. As I pressed upon them, they increased their pace; and before we had proceeded half a mile I was riding by the shoulder of a dark-chestnut old bull, whose head towered high above the rest. Letting fly at the gallop, I wounded him behind the shoulder, soon after which I broke him from the herd, and presently, going ahead of him, he came to a stand; I then gave him a second bullet, somewhere near the first. These two shots took effect, and he was now in my power, but I would not lay him low so far from camp, and, having waited until he had regained his breath, I drove him half-way back towards the waggons; here he became obstreperous, so, reloading one barrel, and pointing my rifle upwards, I shot him in the throat, when, rearing high, he fell backwards and expired. This was a magnificent specimen of the giraffe, measuring upwards of eighteen feet in height. I stood for nearly half an hour engrossed in the contemplation of his extreme beauty and gigantic proportions; and, if there had been no elephants, I could have exclaimed, like Duke Alexander of Gordon when he killed the famous old stag with seventeen tine, "Now I can die happy." But I longed for an encounter with the noble elephants, and thought no more of the giraffe than if I had killed a gemsbok or an eland.

In the afternoon I drew up my waggons among some bushes about four hundred yards to leeward of the water. In the evening I was employed in manufacturing hardened bullets for the elephants, using a composition of one of pewter to four of lead, and had just completed my work when we



CAMELOPARD HUNTING AT MASSOUEY.

1

heard a troop of elephants splashing and trumpeting in the water; this was to me a joyful sound, and I slept little that night.

On the 26th I arose at earliest dawn, and having fed four of my horses proceeded with Isaac to the fountain to examine the spoor of the animals which had drunk there during the night: a number of the paths contained fresh spoor of elephants of all sizes, which had left it in different directions. We reckoned that at least thirty of these gigantic quadrupeds had visited the water during the night.

Having breakfasted, I saddled up, and proceeded to take up the spoor of the largest bull elephant, accompanied by after-riders and three of the guides to assist in spooring; I was also accompanied by my dogs. Having selected the spoor of a mighty bull, the Bechuanas went ahead, and I followed; it was extremely interesting and exciting work; the footprint of this elephant was about two feet in diameter, and was beautifully visible in the soft sand. The spoor at first led us for about three miles along one of the sandy foot-paths in an easterly direction without a check; we then entered a very thick forest; the elephant had here gone a little out of the path to smash some trees and plough up the earth with his tusks, but soon returned and held along it for several miles.

We were on rather elevated ground, with a fine view of a part of the Bamangwato chain of mountains before us; the trees were well grown, but not strong enough to resist the inconceivable strength of the mighty monarchs of these regions, for half the branches were broken short, and at every hundred yards we came upon entire trees, and these the largest in the forest, uprooted clean out of the ground, or broken short across their stems: I observed several with their roots uppermost in the air. Our friend of whom we were in search had halted here, and fed for a long time upon a wide-spreading tree which he had broken within a few feet of the ground. After following the spoor some distance farther through the dense mazes of the forest, we got into ground so thickly trodden by elephants that we were baffled in our endeavours to trace it farther; and after wasting several

hours in attempting by casts to take up the proper spoor, we gave it up, and with a sorrowful heart I turned my horse's head towards camp.

Having reached the waggons, I reviewed the whole day's work, and feeling much regret at my want of luck in my first day's elephant-hunting, resolved that night to watch the water, and try what could be done with elephants by night-shooting. I accordingly ordered the usual watching-hole to be constructed, and having placed my bedding in it, repaired thither shortly after sundown. I had lain here about two hours, when I heard a low rumbling noise like distant thunder, caused (as the Bechuanas affirmed) by the bowels of the elephants which were approaching the fountain. I was on my back, with my mouth open, listening attentively, and could hear them ploughing up the earth with their tusks. Presently they walked up to the water, and commenced drinking within fifty yards of me, approaching so quietly that I fancied it was the footsteps of jackals, and I was not aware of their presence until I heard the water which they had drawn up in their trunks and were pouring into their mouths, dropping into the fountain. I then peeped from my hole with a beating heart and beheld two enormous bull elephants, which looked like two great castles, standing before me; but I could not see very distinctly, for there was only starlight. Having lain on my breast some time taking aim, I let fly at one, using the Dutch rifle carrying six to the pound; the ball told loudly on his shoulder, and uttering a loud cry he stumbled through the fountain, when both made off in different directions.

All night large herds of zebras and blue wildebeests capered around me, coming sometimes within a few yards; several parties of rhinoceroses also made their appearance, and feeling a little apprehensive that lions might join the party every time that hyænas or jackals lapped the water, I looked forth, but no lions appeared. At length I fell into a sound sleep, nor did I again raise my head until the bright star of morn had shot far above the eastern horizon.

Before proceeding further with my narrative, it may here be interesting to make a few remarks on the African elephant

and his habits. This wonderful animal is met with in herds of various numbers through the vast forests. The male is very much larger than the female, consequently much more difficult to kill; he is provided with two enormous tusks, which are long, tapering, and beautifully arched; their length averages from six to eight feet, and they weigh from sixty to a hundred pounds each. In the vicinity of the equator elephants attain a greater size than farther south, and I am in the possession of a pair of tusks of the African bull elephant, the larger of which measures ten feet nine inches in length, and weighs one hundred and seventy-three pounds: the females, unlike Asiatic elephants in this respect, are likewise provided with tusks. The price which the largest ivory fetches in the English market is from 28*l.* to 40*l.* per hundred and twelve pounds. Old bull elephants are found singly or in pairs, or consorting together in small herds, varying from six to twenty individuals; the younger bulls remain for many years in the company of their mothers, and these are met with in large herds of from twenty to a hundred individuals. The food of the elephant consists of the branches, leaves, and roots of trees, and also of a variety of bulbs, the situation of which he discovers by his exquisite sense of smell: to obtain these he turns up the ground with his tusks, and whole acres may be seen thus ploughed up. Elephants consume an immense quantity of food, and pass the greater part of the day and night in feeding. Like the whale in the ocean, the elephant on land is acquainted with, and roams over, wide and extensive tracts; he is extremely particular in always frequenting the freshest and most verdant districts of the forest, and when one district is parched and barren, he will forsake it for years and wander to great distances in quest of better pasture.

The elephant entertains an extraordinary horror of man; a child passing at a quarter of a mile to windward will put a hundred of them to flight, and when thus disturbed they go a long way before they halt: it is surprising how soon these sagacious animals are aware of the presence of a hunter in their domains. When one troop has been attacked, all the other elephants frequenting the district are aware of the fact *within two or three days*, when they all forsake it, and migrate



to distant parts, leaving the sportsman no alternative but to inspan his waggons, and remove to fresh ground: this constitutes one of the greatest difficulties a skilful elephant-hunter encounters. Even in the most remote parts, which may be reckoned the head-quarters of the elephant, it is only occasionally, and with inconceivable toil and hardship, that the eye of the hunter is cheered by the sight of one. Owing to habits peculiar to himself, the elephant is more inaccessible, and much more rarely seen, than any other wild animal, excepting certain rare antelopes; they choose for their resort the most lonely and secluded depths of the forest, and generally at a very great distance from the rivers and fountains at which they drink. In dry, warm weather they visit these every night, but in cool and cloudy weather they drink only once every third or fourth day. About sundown the elephant leaves his distant midday haunt, and commences his march towards some fountain, which is probably from twelve to twenty miles distant; this he generally reaches between the hours of nine and midnight, when, having slaked his thirst and cooled his body by spouting large volumes of water over his back with his trunk, he resumes the path to his forest solitudes. I have remarked that full-grown bulls, having reached a secluded spot, lie down on their broadsides, about the hour of midnight, and sleep for a few hours; they usually select an ant-hill, which is often from thirty to forty feet in diameter at its base, and lie around it with their backs resting against it: the mark of the under-tusk is always deeply imprinted in the ground, proving that they lie upon their sides. I never remarked that females had thus lain down, and it is only in the more secluded districts that the bulls adopt this practice; for I observed that, in districts where the elephants were liable to be disturbed, they took repose standing on their legs beneath some shady tree. Having slept they feed immensely. Spreading out from one another, and proceeding in a zigzag course, they smash and destroy the finest trees which happen to lie in their way. The number of them which a herd of bull elephants will thus destroy is utterly incredible. They are extremely capricious, and on coming to a group of five or *six trees* not unfrequently break down the whole of them.

when, having perhaps only tasted one or two small branches, they pass on and continue their wanton work of destruction. I have repeatedly gone through forests where the trees thus broken lay so thick across one another that it was almost impossible to ride through them, and it is in situations such as these that attacking the elephant is attended with most danger. During the night they will feed in open plains and thinly-wooded districts; but as day dawns they retire to the densest covers within reach, which nine times in ten consist of impracticable wait-a-bit thorns, and here they remain drawn up in a compact herd during the heat of the day. In remote districts, however, and in cool weather, I have known herds to continue pasturing throughout the whole day.

The appearance of the wild elephant is inconceivably majestic and imposing; his gigantic height and colossal bulk, so greatly surpassing all other quadrupeds, combined with his sagacious disposition and peculiar habits, impart to him an interest in the eyes of the hunter which no other animal can call forth. His pace when undisturbed is a bold, free, sweeping step; and from the spongy formation of his foot, his tread is extremely light and inaudible, and all his movements are attended with singular gentleness and grace; this, however, only applies to the elephant when roaming undisturbed in his jungle, for when roused by the hunter, he proves a most dangerous enemy, and far more difficult to conquer than any other beast of the chase.

On the 27th, as day dawned, I left my shooting-hole, and proceeded to inspect the spoor of the wounded elephant; after following it for some distance I came to an abrupt hillock, which I ascended, fancying that from the summit a good view of the surrounding country might be obtained. In this I was not disappointed, and looking east, beheld to my inexpressible gratification a troop of nine or ten elephants quietly browsing within a quarter of a mile of me. I allowed myself only one glance, and then rushed down to warn my followers to be silent; a council-of-war was hastily held, the result of which was my ordering Isaac to ride hard to camp, and return as quickly as possible with Kleinboy, my dogs, the large Dutch rifle, and a fresh horse. After this I once more ascended the hillock

to feast my eyes upon the enchanting sight before me; and, drawing out my glass, narrowly watched the motions of the herd; this consisted entirely of females, several of which were followed by small calves.

Presently, while reconnoitring the surrounding country, I discovered a second herd of five bull elephants, quietly feeding about a mile to the northward, while the cows were towards a rocky ridge that stretched away from the base of the hillock on which I stood. Burning with impatience to commence the attack, I resolved to try the stalking-system with these, and hunt the troop of bulls with dogs and horses. Having thus decided, I directed the guides to watch the elephants from the summit of the hillock, and the ground and wind favouring me, I soon gained the rocky ridge. They were now within a hundred yards, and with a beating heart I resolved to enjoy the pleasure of watching their movements as they came slowly towards me, breaking the branches from the trees with their trunks, and eating the leaves and tender shoots. At length two of the troop walked gently past, and the finest which I had selected was feeding with two others on a thorny tree about sixty yards from me.

My hand was now as steady as the rock on which it rested, so, taking a deliberate aim, I let fly at her head a little behind the eye; she got it hard and sharp, just where I aimed, but it did not seem to affect her much. Uttering a loud cry, however, she wheeled about, when I gave her the second ball, close behind the shoulder, upon which they all made a strange rumbling noise, and set off in a line at a brisk ambling pace, their huge fanlike ears flapping in the ratio of their speed. I did not wait to reload, but ran back to the hillock, and on gaining its summit the guides pointed out the herd standing in a grove of shady trees, the wounded one being some distance behind with another elephant, doubtless its particular friend, who was endeavouring to assist it; these elephants had probably never before heard the report of a gun; and, having neither seen nor smelt me, were unconscious of the presence of man, and did not seem inclined to go any farther. My servants now came up, but I waited some time, that the dogs *and horses might recover their wind.* We then rode towards





COLERBERG DECLINES BEING MOUNTED

the elephants, and had advanced within two hundred yards of them when, the ground being open, they observed us, and made off in an easterly direction; the wounded one dropped astern, and next moment was surrounded by the dogs, which, barking angrily, engrossed her attention.

Having placed myself between her and the retreating troop, I dismounted within forty yards of her, in open ground; and Colesberg being extremely frightened, gave me much trouble, jerking my arm when I tried to fire. At length I let fly; but, on endeavouring to regain the saddle, my horse would not allow me to mount; and when I tried to lead him, and run for it, he backed towards the wounded elephant. At this moment I heard another close behind me; and looking about beheld the "friend," with uplifted trunk, charging down upon me at top speed, trumpeting shrilly and following an old deaf pointer named Schwartz, that trotted along before the enraged animal. I felt certain she would have either me or the horse, nevertheless I determined not to relinquish my steed, and held on by the bridle. My men, who of course kept at a safe distance, stood aghast with their mouths open, and for a few seconds my position certainly was not an enviable one; fortunately, however, the dogs took off the attention of the elephants, and just as they were upon me, I managed to spring into the saddle, expecting every second to feel one of their trunks lay hold of my body. Kleinboy and Isaac, pale and almost speechless with fright, now handed me my two-grooved rifle, when I returned to the charge, and sent another brace of bullets into the wounded elephant, but Colesberg was extremely unsteady, and destroyed the correctness of my aim.

The friend now seemed resolved to do some mischief, and charged furiously, pursuing me several hundred yards; I therefore deemed it proper to give her a gentle hint to act less officiously, and having loaded, and approached within thirty yards, gave it her sharp, right and left, behind the shoulder, upon which she at once made off with drooping trunk, and evidently with a mortal wound. I never recur to this my first day's elephant-shooting without regretting my folly in contenting myself with securing only one elephant; *the first was dying, and could not leave the ground, the second*

was also mortally wounded, and I had only to follow and finish her ; but I foolishly amused myself with the first, which kept walking backwards, and standing by every tree she passed, allowed her to escape. Two more shots settled her : on receiving these she tossed her trunk up and down two or three times, and, falling on her broadside against a thorny tree, which yielded like grass before her enormous weight, uttered a deep hoarse cry, and expired. This was a very handsome old cow elephant, and, as I have before remarked, was decidedly the best in the troop ; she was in excellent condition, and carried a pair of long and perfect tusks. I was in high spirits at my success, and felt so satisfied with having killed one, that, although it was still early in the day, and my horses were fresh, I allowed the troop of five bulls to remain unmolested, trusting to fall in with them next day. So little did I then know of the habits of elephants, or the rules to be adopted in hunting them !

Having knee-haltered our horses, we set to work with our knives and assagais to prepare the skull for the hatchet, in order to take out the tusks, nearly half the length of which, I may mention, is embedded in bone sockets in the fore part of the skull ; to remove the tusks of a cow-elephant requires barely one-fifth of the labour requisite to cut out those of a bull, and by the time the sun went down we had only managed by our combined efforts to detach one of the tusks, with which we triumphantly returned to camp, having left the guides in charge of the carcase, near which they volunteered to take up their quarters for the night. On reaching the waggons I found Johannus and Carollus in a happy state of indifference to all passing events : they were both very drunk, having broken into both wine-cask and spirit-case.

On the 28th I rose at an early hour, and, burning with anxiety to look forth once more from the summit of the hillock which the day before brought me such luck, I made a hasty breakfast, and rode thither with after-riders and my dogs ; but, alas ! I had allowed the golden opportunity to slip. I sought in vain ; and although I often ascended my favourite hillock in that and the succeeding year, my eyes were destined never to hail a troop of elephants from it again.

We were now within two days' march of the kraal of Sicomy, king of the extensive territory of Bamangwato; this great chief was reported to be in possession of large quantities of ivory, and as I had brought a number of muskets and other articles for barter, I was anxious to push on and conclude my trading before resuming elephant-hunting; more especially since it was not improbable that, having once led the way, other adventurers might follow in my track, and perhaps spoil my market. Taking this into consideration, I marched on the morning of the 30th upon the kraal of Sicomy, and held for the Bamangwato mountains, the summits of which we could see peering above the intervening forest in an easterly direction. On our march we passed near to the carcass of the elephant which I had slain three days before; the number of vultures congregated here was truly wonderful—my guides had baked a part of the trunk and two of the feet, and these they now brought to the waggons. It was always to me a source of great pleasure to reflect that, while enriching myself in following my favourite pursuit of elephant-hunting, I was frequently feeding and making happy the starving families of hundreds of the Bechuana and Bakalahari tribes, who invariably followed my waggons, and assisted me in hunting, in numbers varying from fifty to two hundred. These men were often accompanied by their wives and families, and when an elephant or other large animal was slain, all hands repaired to the spot, when every inch of flesh was reduced to biltongue, viz. cut into long narrow strips, hung in festoons upon poles, and dried in the sun: sometimes even the entrails were not left for the vultures and hyænas, the very bones being chopped to pieces with their hatchets to obtain the marrow, with which they enriched their soup.

On the 1st of July we inspanned at dawn, and late in the afternoon reached Lesausau, having performed an extremely arduous and fatiguing march. Our route during the greater part of the day lay through dense jungle and thorny thickets, where it was necessary to clear a way with our axes before the waggons could pass; the ground, in many places extremely rocky, threatened the destruction of my wheels and axletrees, and caused us much labour, it being indispensable



to remove the masses of rock. On nearing Lesausau we entered upon a broad level strath, adorned throughout its length and breadth with a variety of picturesque acacia and other trees, which stood at intervals as if they had been planted by the hand of man; on either side the mountains rose abruptly from the plain, and assumed a very bold and striking appearance, their sides and summits consisting of huge masses of rock piled one above another, some of which seemed so balanced upon their exalted and narrow pedestals,

“As if an infant's touch could urge  
Their headlong passage down the verge.”

A light and feathery fringe of dwarfish trees and varieties of gigantic cacti adorned the sides and upper ridges of these rugged hills, and, as we proceeded, I observed finely wooded wild ravines stretching away into the bosom of the mountains.

Here we were joined by three of Sicomy's men, who informed us that they were in daily apprehension of an attack from the Matabili, and in consequence of this that chief and all his tribe had forsaken their kraals, and were now living in caves and other secluded retreats in the sides and on the summits of the mountains. Leading us round the base of a bold projecting rock, we came to a wild and well-wooded ravine, in which there were no traces of men; but on raising our eyes, we perceived the mountain tops covered with women and children, and very soon detached parties of Sicomy's warriors came pouring in from different directions, to gaze upon the white man, I being the first that many of them had seen. These men were all armed and ready for action, each bearing an oval shield of ox, buffalo, or camelopard's hide, a battle-axe, and three or four assagais; they wore karosses of jackal's and leopard's skins, which hung gracefully from their shoulders, and many of them sported a round tuft of black ostrich-feathers on their heads, while others had adorned their woolly hair with one or two wavy plumes of white ones—both men and women wore abundance of the usual ornaments of beads and brass and copper wire.

We were presently met by a messenger from Sicomy, saying *the king was happy we had arrived, and that he would shortly*

come to see me. We proceeded up the bold and narrow ravine of Lesausau as far as it was practicable, the water being at its upper extremity; and soon after we had encamped Sicomy drew nigh, accompanied by a large retinue of his principal men and warriors. He was of middle stature, and appeared to be about thirty years of age; his distinguishing feature was a wall-eye, which gave his countenance a roguish look that did not belie the cunning and deceitful character of the man. As he came up to the waggons I met and shook hands with him, and invited him to partake of coffee; and though I could see he was enchanted at my arrival, he assumed an abrupt and rather dictatorial manner, occasionally turning round and cracking jokes with his councillors and nobility, and talking at a very rapid pace. He was very anxious to ascertain from Isaac the contents of the waggons, and said that he would buy everything I had brought, and give me a large bull elephant's tusk for each of my muskets.

This was a fishing remark to hear what I should say; so I replied that the muskets cost many teeth in my own country, and I had not stolen them; for I resolved to maintain a firm and independent manner in my dealings, treating him at the same time with the utmost affability. I told him that other men feared to come so far to trade with him, but that his friend Dr. Livingstone had recommended me to do so, and that I was the bearer of a present from him. I then gave it him, with another from myself, consisting of beads, snuff, and ammunition. It amused me to observe the timid and cringing demeanour of the men of Booby when seated in the presence of the king; approaching him with the utmost humility, they saluted him by stretching out their hands and clapping the palms together, saying at the same time, "Rumèla, così!" signifying, Hail, king! which his majesty was graciously pleased to acknowledge by squinting at them with his cock-eye, and saying "Eh!" which is the invariable Bechuana acknowledgment of a salutation. The natives acknowledged mine by saying, "Eh! keitumèla, così a Machoa;" signifying, "Eh! thank you, king of the white men." Having saluted the king, the Booby men at once proceeded to expatiate upon the difficulty they had had in prevailing upon the great white

man to visit his dominions, and the meritorious manner in which they had conducted me thither; for which his majesty expressed his gratitude, and ordered "boyalwa," or native beer, to be placed before them. Sicomy remained long at the waggons, engaged in deep and constant conversation with my interpreter and several of his elder councillors, and at a late hour departed, promising to visit us early on the following day; fearing, however, that any of his people might come and trade with me during his absence, he instructed his uncle Mutchuisho, with a retinue, to remain beside the waggons during the night.

At an early hour the king made his appearance, attended by a number of his warriors, all carrying their battle-gear; I was still in bed, and seeing his majesty peeping into my waggon, pretended to be asleep. Presently I observed a savage coming up the glen bearing on his shoulders a bull elephant's tooth, which he laid under the waggon. Coffee was now announced, so I arose, and the king breakfasted with me. I had resolved to say as little as possible about the ivory, and to appear very indifferent, a system indispensable in trading with the natives, which at all times progresses slowly, but much more so if the trader allows them to imagine he is very anxious to obtain possession of their goods. In dealing with the Bechuanas the most difficult point is agreeing about the price of any article in the first instance; but when business has once commenced, and the natives are satisfied with the price, exchanges are effected rapidly. The trader should ask a little more than he expects to get, that he may appear to yield to their importunity, otherwise they would not deal with him. They never conclude a bargain in a hurry, and always deem it necessary to ask the advice of nearly every one present before they can make up their minds; and should any one individual disapprove of the bargain, barter is for the time at an end.

I have more than once been prevented from effecting a sale, which I had all but concluded, by some old wife, who happened to be passing at the moment, exclaiming that I was too high in my prices, although she was perfectly ignorant of the terms of our transaction.

While Sicomy was taking his coffee, he told me he had despatched men to bring elephants' teeth, which he said were at a distance, and that he would purchase everything as quickly as possible, that I might be enabled to leave the country before the Matabili should come. The rumour about that tribe I at the time suspected to be a fabrication, but subsequently ascertained it was a fact.

In the forenoon I occupied myself in writing my journal, and could see that the king was annoyed at my indifference about trading; at length he asked me to come out of the waggon, saying he had brought a present for me, and he produced the elephant's tusk which lay beneath the vehicle. Having thanked him, I expressed myself satisfied with his gift, and in return immediately presented him with what he considered an equivalent in beads. He now asked me the price of my muskets, and I answered four large bull elephant's teeth for each, upon which he retired to an adjacent grove, where he sat consulting with his councillors for hours. Two men at length appeared, coming from opposite directions, each bearing a bull's tooth. When they arrived, Sicomy ordered the teeth to be placed before me, and calling Isaac, inflicted on me a long harangue, talking all manner of nonsense, and endeavouring to obtain a musket for the two, adding subsequently a third, but a much smaller one. After much chaffering till it was near sunset, he once more offered me two tusks for a gun, said he was going home, and that he did not know if he should come again. I replied that I had never asked him to purchase anything, and was perfectly indifferent whether he did or not; that there were other chiefs who were anxious to purchase my goods, and that my reason for visiting his territory was to enjoy the sport of elephant-hunting. Having thus spoken, I wished him good evening, and, shouldering my rifle, stalked up the rocky ravine.

At an early hour Sicomy was again at the waggons; and having breakfasted, commenced where he had left off on the previous day; after a protracted discussion, the third tusk was produced, when I handed him a musket. He next bothered me for a bullet-mould, which having received, he insisted on my giving him a lead-ladle. This I said I could

not give him with one gun, but promised if he dealt liberally with me he should have one; he continued his importunity about the ladle till late in the afternoon, when he began to talk about buying a second gun. Three more tusks were brought, and we had nearly come to an agreement, when some of his councillors told him that he ought to have had powder and bullets with the first gun. He continued to pester me and harp on this string till a late hour, when I told him that if he thought he had given too much for the gun he had better return it, and take away his tusks; and having consulted a short time with his wise men, he did so. I then shouldered my rifle, and held for the wells, to give the dogs water. They were situated at a great distance from camp, and yielded a very moderate supply. Here I met with large parties of the Bamangwato women drawing water, which they bore in earthen vessels balanced on their heads to their elevated retreats in the mountains. The pits where my cattle drank were also distant from the waggons, and did not yield a sufficient quantity, the consequence of which was that my horses and oxen had already sadly fallen off in condition; in this state of things I resolved that my stay at Bamangwato should not exceed another day, and determined if possible to come to terms with Sicomy on the following morning. On returning to camp, Carollus reported half the oxen missing, which threw me into a state of great alarm; I at once suspected treachery, and well knew that if Sicomy had taken them they would not easily be recovered. I instantly despatched two mounted men in different directions, with instructions to ride hard and seek the spoor; they returned at a late hour, having found them.

On reviewing my prospects of trading I could not help feeling annoyed at the dilatory mode in which it progressed; for this, however, there was no help, and on the following day I reaped the benefit of my policy.

Although I voted these matters an immense bore, it was nevertheless well worth a little time and inconvenience, on account of the enormous profit I should realise; I had paid 16*l.* for a case containing twenty muskets, while the value of the ivory I demanded for each firelock was upwards of 80*l.*

being about 3000 per cent., which I am informed is reckoned among mercantile men to be a very fair profit. Sicomy was in those days possessed of very large quantities of splendid ivory, and a great deal still passes annually through his hands. Since I first visited Bamangwato, and taught the natives the use of fire-arms, they have learnt to kill the elephant themselves; but previous to my arrival they were utterly incapable of subduing a full-grown elephant, even by the united exertions of the whole tribe. All the ivory which Sicomy then had, and much of what he probably has now, is from elephants slain with assagais by an active and daring race of Bushmen inhabiting very remote regions to the north and north-west of Bamangwato.

He obtained this ivory for a few beads, and then compelled some of the poor Bakalahari, or wild natives of the desert (over whom he conceives he has a perfect right to tyrannize), to bear it on their shoulders across extensive deserts of burning sand to his head-quarters at Bamangwato; so great was the fatigue endured by these poor creatures while so employed that many of them continually died on the way. At an early hour on the 4th, Sicomy not appearing, I proceeded to his residence, accompanied by Isaac and a party of his own men, and after a long and weary walk up the mountain-side and through masses of rock, we reached the chief's temporary retreat; this consisted of a small circular hut, composed of a framework of boughs of trees, interlined with twigs and covered with grass. A number of similar ones were erected around the royal dwelling, on spots which his men had cleared among the rocks; this kraal, however, was the abode of only a very small part of his tribe, which was extensively scattered over different parts of the mountain range, and occupied sundry distant cattle outposts.

I found Sicomy seated before his wigwam, in earnest conversation with his councillors, and informed him that, owing to the scarcity of water at Lesausau, I could not prolong my visit, that I had come to take my leave, and had brought him a few presents. He thanked me, and said he was happy that I had visited his country; but that one thing made his heart sore, *viz.*, that we had not been able to trade. I replied that

that was his fault, for I had offered him my goods on the same liberal terms I had done to others, but that I was still willing to deal with him, if he would do so fairly. We then all started for the waggons, where the barter went on briskly. The king continued drinking coffee and taking snuff at a tremendous rate, and large bowls of his boyalwa were freely circulated throughout the day. He gave me three bull's tusks for each of the first two muskets, I giving him some powder and lead to boot; after which the price fell to two tusks for each musket. With this rate of exchange the whole assembly seemed perfectly satisfied, and the trading went on without a murmur. Athletic savages were constantly coming and going throughout the day in three different directions, bearing on their shoulders the precious spoils of the elephants of the Kalahari; and when the sun went down all my muskets were disposed of, and I found myself in the possession of a very valuable lot of ivory. I also effected several exchanges of beads and ammunition for the tusks of cow-elephants. I had resolved to purchase fine specimens of the native costume and arms, &c.; but ivory being the most important article, I thought it best to defer all minor transactions until our trade in that was concluded. The king seemed highly delighted with his purchases, and insisted on discharging each musket as he bought it—throwing back his kaross, and applying the stock to his naked shoulder, he shut his good eye, and kept the wall-eye open, to the intense amusement of the Hottentots, who were his instructors on the occasion. Each report caused the utmost excitement among the warriors, who pressed forward and requested that they also might be permitted to try their skill with these novel implements of war.

The king had a most wonderful knobkerry, which I was determined, if possible, to obtain; it was made of the horn of the kobaoba, a very rare species of the rhinoceros, and of extraordinary length, greatly exceeding anything I had seen of the kind before, or have ever met with since. Handing Sicomy my snuff-box, I pointed to the kerry, and asked him where the kobaoba had been killed. He answered it had been sent him by a chief who resided at an amazing distance on the borders of the Lake of Boats. I then asked him to give it to

me to keep in remembrance of him; but he replied that it belonged to his wife, and he could not part with it. Presently, however, while sipping his coffee, he said that if I chose I might purchase it, if I would fill the cup which he then held with gunpowder. Accordingly, when his majesty had drained it, I handed him the powder, and became possessor of the kobaoba kerry, which I still have, and on which I place a very great value. It was now night, and the king with his suite bivouacked round the watch-fires which the Bechuanas invariably keep up. Their beds were of long dried grass, and the bivouac was fenced in by a hedge of thorny branches.

At an early hour next morning I obtained some very fine specimens of karosses and Bechuana arms: about these, as with the ivory, there was considerable haggling, and I paid them long prices for their "chakas" or battle-axes, on which all the Bechuana tribes place a very great value.

I had intended to penetrate beyond Bamangwato; but partly owing to gross misrepresentations made to me by Isaac relative to Sicomy's wishes on the subject, and partly to the threatened attack from the Matabili, I resolved for the present not to extend my peregrinations further, and hunt for the remainder of the season the fine country between Bamangwato and Sichely's mountains.



## CHAPTER XV.

TAKE LEAVE OF SICOMY—DIGGING FOR WATER—ROAN ANTELOPE—  
SICOMY'S CAMP AGAIN—BULL ELEPHANT.

ABOUT eleven o'clock A.M. on the 5th of July, everything being ready, I took leave of Sicomy and retraced my steps to Corriebely. It caused me much pain and anxiety to observe that my cattle were extremely hollow-looking and spiritless from want of water; not one of them having had a sufficiency of that essential of life since they left, and several were so distressed that I entertained considerable fears of their being able to reach that fountain. I was accompanied by a small party of Sicomy's men, who followed me in the hope of obtaining flesh, and having proceeded about a mile missed my greyhound Flam, which had been doubtless stolen by the king's orders, his predilection for that kind of dog being notorious. After trekking about six miles we reached a deep gravel-hole beside a mass of red granite rock, at the bottom of which was about a bucketful of spring water, and the fountain of Corriebely being still very distant, I set hard to work with all my followers to remove the gravel, and had the satisfaction to discover a small spring of excellent water, which issued from beneath the granite rock and ran as fast as we could catch it in our pails. This opportune supply of water was to me invaluable, my poor dogs, as well as the cattle, being much distressed.

Revived in spirits we continued our journey, and at sundown halted about half-way to Corriebely, reaching it about ten o'clock on the following morning, most thankful to have succeeded in bringing all my wretched cattle alive to a fountain where they could drink their fill. While we were at breakfast three of Sicomy's men approached, leading my *greyhound*.

In the afternoon we inspanned, and marched to the scene of the fall of my first elephant, where we halted for the night. On reaching Massouey I carefully examined the elephants' footpaths, and had almost made the circuit of the fountain, and hope had died within me, when, lo! there lay before me, broad and long, and fresh as fresh could be, the enormous spoor of two mighty bull elephants which had drunk there during the night. This was glorious! I had great faith in the spooring powers of the Bamangwato men, and felt certain that at length the day had arrived on which I was to kill my first bull elephant; the Bechuanas at once took up the spoor, and went ahead in a masterly manner, and with buoyant spirits I followed in their steps. The spoor led about due west, a direction in which I had not yet been; having followed it for many miles through a desert country, we reached a district where the berries to which Knop-kop is so partial grew in great abundance, and here the elephants had commenced feeding upon their roots, and ploughing up the sand extensively with their tusks. Their traces, old and new, extended on all sides, crossing and recrossing one another in every direction, and thus we eventually lost the spoor. After a fruitless search of several hours, and many vain endeavours to retrieve the day by trying back on the spoor and making wide casts to the right and left, I was completely beaten, and compelled to drop it, the Bechuanas sitting down and sulkily refusing to proceed farther. On the road home we came upon a herd of fifteen camelopards, and after a severe chase, during which they kept their line with a regularity worthy of a troop of dragoons, I succeeded in separating a fine bull, upwards of eighteen feet in height, and brought him to the ground within a short distance of the camp. The Bechuanas, delighted at my success, kindled a fire and slept beside the carcase, which they very soon reduced to biltongue and marrow-bones.

On the morning of the 8th I walked to the fountain, and examined the ground about it, but there was no fresh spoor. It was a charming cool day, with a fine bracing wind, the sky beautifully overcast with clouds, and as I rode along the elephants' footpaths after breakfast I perceived the marks of *their strength in every grove*, and all the large trees in the

vicinity of the muddy vleys, which at this season were dry, were plastered with sun-baked mud to a height of twelve feet from the ground.

In the evening I took my heavy single-barrelled rifle, and, sauntering towards the fountain, observed a large herd of blue wildebeests moving slowly up the vley to drink. I accordingly lay flat on the ground behind a low bush near which they must pass, and presently raised my head to see how they were advancing, when I perceived a pair of the rare and beautiful roan antelope or bastard gemsbok warily approaching within a hundred and twenty yards of me. Selecting the buck, I let fly, and missed. The whole herd of wildebeests now wheeled to the right-about, and, enveloped in a cloud of dust, thundered down the vley; but the two roan antelopes, which had probably never before heard the report of a gun, stood looking about them, while I hastily reloaded. This being accomplished, I again let fly, and the old buck dropped to the shot; the ball entered his shoulder, and he lay kicking and roaring until I had almost reloaded, when he regained his feet and made off after his comrade. At this moment Argyll and Bonteborg, two right good dogs, having heard the shots, and perceived the bastard gemsboks, gave chase, and, to my surprise, the wounded buck, instead of turning to bay, set off at a rapid pace. It was now almost dark, but I followed in the direction he had taken; suddenly I heard a rushing noise, and in another instant the wounded antelope met me face to face, closely pursued by five of the dogs. He was making for the water, where he would have bayed, had I not unluckily turned him; my rifle also was in its holster, which prevented my firing, so the buck held close past the waggons, where more dogs joined the pack.

On reaching the camp I found that Kleinboy had seen the chase and followed, and soon after he returned breathless to the waggons, with the news that the antelope was at bay beyond a low ridge within half a mile of camp, and killing the dogs right and left. Seizing my rifle, I accompanied him towards the spot, and soon heard the music of my pack, and found the bastard gemsbok lying beside a bush with the dogs barking round him. Three of them that followed me from camp, see

ing the buck lying, rushed in upon him, when he struck furiously right and left, killed one dead on the spot, and severely wounded another behind the shoulder; these were Vitfoot and Argyll, two of my best hounds. Again he struck right and left, and knocked over Wolf and Flam with amazing violence, severely injuring them; he had killed Bles, my stoutest and fiercest dog, before I came up, the horn having entered his heart. It was a long time before I could fire, for the night was dark, and the gemsbok lay on the ground, with the surviving dogs still pressing close upon him; at length he stood up, when I shot him dead with a single barrel: he proved to be the wounded buck, having received my first ball in the shoulder. This was a first-rate specimen of the roan antelope, and carried a pair of superb scimitar-shaped horns, which were long and fairly set, and beautifully knotted. Before leaving Massouey two more noble giraffes fell before my rifle, also several fat elands and other varieties of game.

After remaining in the neighbourhood of the fountain several days, and finding it entirely deserted by the elephants, I determined to retrace my steps and seek for them beyond Bamangwato, for I found that I had been grossly deceived, and that the king was most anxious I should hunt in his country; accordingly on the 18th we again came to the camp of Sicomy upon the Rocky Mountains. I found the king seated beneath a low shady tree, with a few friends and some of his wives; a number of splendid koodoos' skulls and horns lay rotting about the kraal, among which were several pairs exceeding in size any I had yet beheld. The view in a south-east direction was commanding. From the base of the mountain stretched a dead level park through a bold opening in the range, with groves and forest-trees extending without the slightest break or change as far as I could see; the scene exactly resembled the ocean when viewed from the summit of some bold cliff standing near its shore. Having partaken of the royal malt and hops, we continued our march along the park accompanied by Sicomy's brother, and on looking behind me as we rode I saw many of the natives following in our wake, and small detached parties pouring down from the rocks and *glens on every side, until my suite exceeded two hundred men.*

We held a northerly course, and on the second day reached Letlochee, a strong perpetual fountain, situated in an abrupt and rocky ravine, amongst some low hills bounded on the north and west by a wide and gently-sloping basin or hollow, diversified with extensive groves and open glades: this hollow extended to a breadth of from six to eight miles, and was much frequented by elands and giraffes, and beyond it stretched the boundless extent of the sandy Kalahari desert. Here I daily enjoyed excellent sport with these two varieties of game; but though elephants occasionally visited the water, and we followed on their tracks to an amazing distance, we never obtained a view of them.

On the forenoon of the 23rd a native informed me he had seen a white rhinoceros in thick cover to the south; I accordingly accompanied him to the spot, and, stalking in upon the vast muchocho, found him asleep beneath a shady tree. His appearance reminded me of an enormous hog, which in shape he slightly resembles, and he kept constantly flapping his ears, as a rhinoceros invariably does when sleeping. Before, however, I could get within range, several "rhinoceros-birds" warned him of his impending danger by sticking their bills into his ear, and uttering their harsh, grating cry. Thus aroused, he suddenly sprang to his feet, crashed away through the jungle at a rapid trot, and I saw no more of him. These rhinoceros-birds are constant attendants upon the hippopotamus and the four varieties of rhinoceros, and feed upon the ticks and other parasitic insects that swarm upon those animals; they are of a greyish colour, and nearly as large as a common thrush, their song being very similar to that of the mistletoe-thrush. Many a time have these ever-watchful birds disappointed me in my stalk, and tempted me to invoke an anathema upon their devoted heads: they are the best friends the rhinoceros has, and rarely fail to awaken him even in his soundest nap. Chukuroo perfectly understands their warning, and, springing to his feet, generally looks about him in every direction, after which he invariably makes off. I have often hunted a rhinoceros on horseback, which led me many miles, and received a number of shots before he fell, during which chase several of these birds remained by him to the

last; they perched on his back and sides, and as each bullet told on his shoulder, they rose about six feet in the air, uttering their harsh cry of alarm, and then resumed their position. It sometimes happened that the lower branches of trees, under which the rhinoceros passed, swept them from their perch, but they always recovered it. I have often shot these animals when drinking at the fountains at midnight; but the birds, imagining they were asleep, remained with them till morning, and on my approaching, before they took flight, I noticed that they exerted themselves to their utmost to awaken Chukuroo.

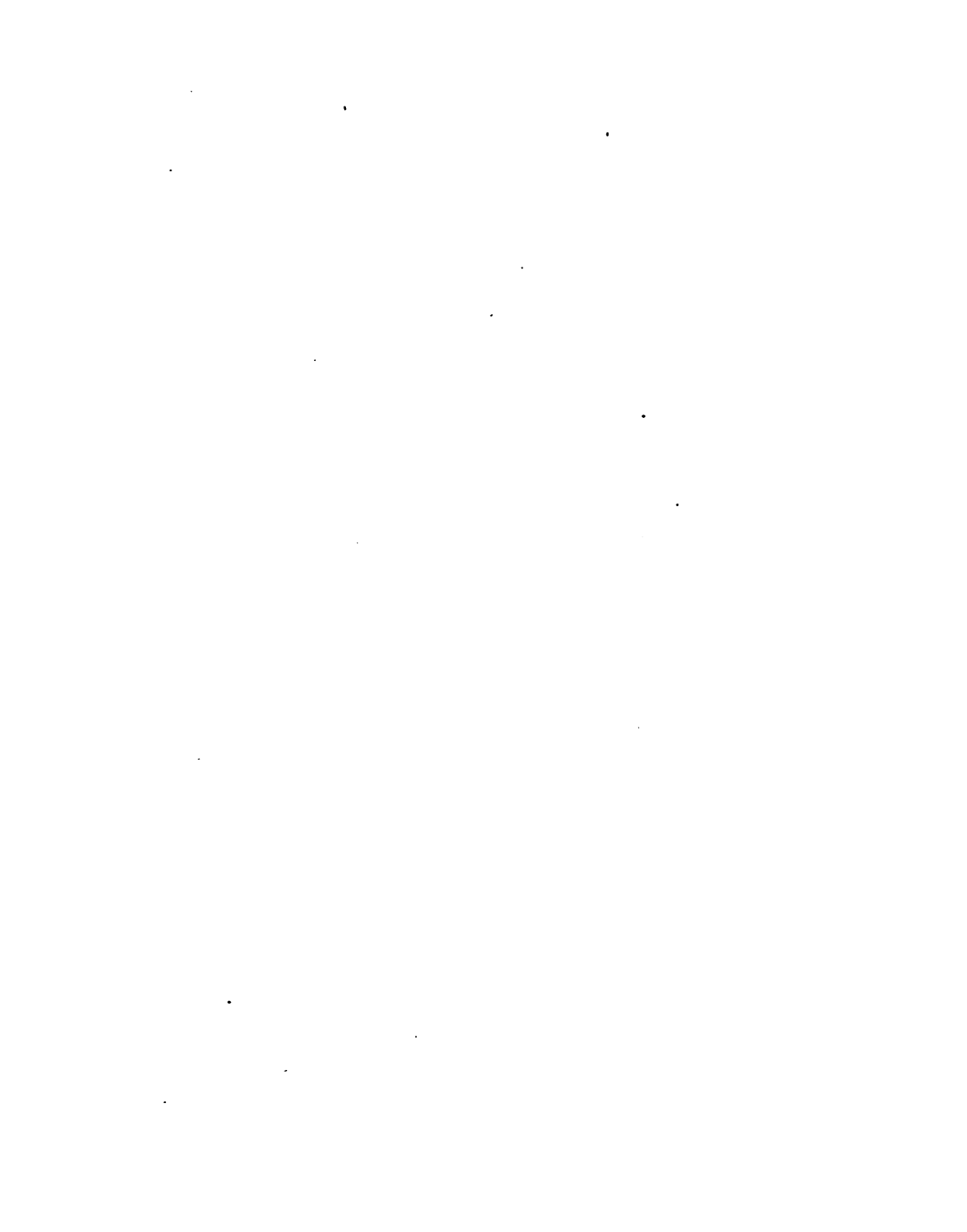
In the evening one of the parties sent out to seek for the spoor of elephants returned to camp, stating that a small tribe of Bakalahari, in a range of mountains to the east, reported these beasts to frequent the forests in the vicinity of their abode, and Mutchuisho, Sicomy's uncle, who attended me whilst hunting his country, requested me to hold myself in readiness to accompany him in quest of the elephants next day.

Accordingly, at an early hour on the 24th, I took the field with Isaac and Kleinboy as after-riders, accompanied by Mutchuisho and a hundred and fifty of his tribe. We held a north-easterly course, and having proceeded about five miles through the forest, reached a fountain, where I observed the spoor of a herd of cow elephants: here we made a short halt, the snuff was briskly circulated, but an inspection of the spoor led to the conclusion that it was two days old, and I was again disappointed.

The country now before me was a vast level forest, extending north and east for about twenty miles without a break; at that distance, however, the landscape was shut in by blue mountain-ranges of considerable height, while two bold conical hills standing close together rose conspicuous above the rest. These were once the ancient habitations of the Bamangwatos, but the cruel Matabili had driven them thence to the rocky mountains amongst which they now live. We continued our course in an easterly direction, and twice crossed the gravelly bed of a periodical river, in which were several small springs of excellent water; elephants had cleared away

the gravel with their trunks from these springs, and the spoor of rhinoceros about them was abundant. After proceeding several miles through a dry and barren tract, where wait-a-bit thorns abounded, we entered a forest adorned with very picturesque old trees in shady groups, and sped through its depths until we emerged upon a small open glade, on which brindled gnoos, two or three troops of pallahs, and a herd of about fifteen camelopards were grazing. We had proceeded about two miles farther, and it was now within two hours of sunset, when, lo! a thorny tree was seen newly smashed by an elephant. Some of the natives attentively examined the leaves of the broken branches to ascertain exactly when he had been there, while others overhauled the spoor. It was that of a first-rate bull, and it was agreed he had fed there that morning. The ground was hard and bad for spooring, but the spoorers showed great skill; and following it for a short distance, we came to where a troop of bull elephants had pastured not many hours before. Huge branches and entire trees, rent and uprooted, lay scattered across our path, the elephants having carried them several yards before they ate the leaves: the soil also was ploughed up by their tusks in quest of roots; and in these places the enormous fresh spoor—that thrilling sight to a hunter's eye—was beautifully visible.

All this was extremely interesting and gratifying; but it was now so very near sunset, that I entertained but faint hopes of finding the game that evening. Mutchuisho, however, was very anxious that I should not be disappointed; he had divested himself of his kaross, and, carrying one of the muskets which Sicomy had bought from me, led the spooring party, about fifteen cunning old hands. The main body he ordered to sit down and keep quiet until the attack commenced. Having followed the spoor for a short distance, the old man became extremely excited, and told me we were close to the elephants; a few minutes after several of the spoorers affirmed they had heard them break a tree in advance, some saying it was in front, others that it was in an opposite direction. Nevertheless, on we went, Mutchuisho extending his men *to the right and left*, while we continued on the spoor, and in







a few minutes one of them came running back breathless to say that he had seen the mighty game. I halted for a minute, and told Isaac, who carried the big Dutch rifle, to act independently, while Kleinboy was to assist me in the chase; but, as usual, when the row began, my followers thought only of number one. As to myself, I bared my arms to the shoulder, and, having imbibed a draught of aqua pura from the calabash of one of the spoorers, grasped my trusty two-grooved rifle, and told my guide to go ahead. This he did, and we had proceeded in silence a few hundred yards farther, when he suddenly stopped, exclaiming, "Klow!" and before us stood a herd of mighty bull elephants, packed together beneath a shady grove about a hundred and fifty yards in advance. I rode slowly towards them, but as soon as they observed me they made a loud rumbling noise, and, tossing their trunks, wheeled right about and made off in one direction, crashing through the forest and leaving a cloud of dust behind them.

The distance I had come, and the difficulties I had undergone, to behold these elephants, rose fresh before me; I determined that on this occasion at least I would do my duty, and, dashing my spurs into "Sunday's" ribs, was very soon much too close in their rear for safety. The elephants now made an inclination to my left, whereby I obtained a good view of the ivory. The herd consisted of six bulls, four of them full-grown, first-rate elephants; the other two were fine fellows, but had not yet arrived at perfect stature. Of the four old ones, two had much finer tusks than the rest, and for a few seconds I was undecided which of these two I would follow, when, suddenly, the one I fancied had the stoutest tusks broke from his comrades, and, feeling convinced he was the patriarch of the herd, I followed him accordingly. Cantering alongside, I was about to fire, when he instantly turned, and, uttering a trumpet so strong and shrill that the very earth seemed to vibrate beneath my feet, he charged furiously after me for several hundred yards in a direct line, not in the slightest degree interrupted in his course by the trees, which he snapped and overthrew like reeds in his headlong career.

*At length he pulled up in his charge, and as he slowly*

turned to retreat I let fly at his shoulder, Sunday capering and prancing and giving me much trouble—on receiving the ball, the elephant shrugged his shoulder, and made off at a free majestic walk. This shot brought several of the dogs to my assistance, for they had been following the herd, and on their coming up and barking, another headlong charge was the result, accompanied by the never-failing trumpet as before. In this charge he passed close to me, when I saluted him with a second bullet in the shoulder, of which he did not take the slightest notice, and I now determined not to fire again until I could make a steady shot; but although he turned repeatedly, Sunday invariably disappointed me, capering so that it was impossible to fire. At length exasperated, I became reckless of the danger, and, springing from the saddle, approached the elephant under cover of a tree, and gave him a bullet in the side of the head, when, trumpeting so shrilly that the forest trembled, he charged among the dogs, from whom he seemed to fancy the blow had come; and afterwards took up a position in a grove of thorns, with his head towards me. I now walked up close to him, and as he was again in the act of charging (being in those days under wrong impressions as to the practicability of bringing down an elephant with a shot in the forehead), stood coolly in his path until he was within fifteen paces of me, and let drive at the hollow of his forehead, in the vain expectation that by so doing I should end his career. The shot only served to increase his fury—an effect which, I have remarked, shots in the head invariably produce; and continuing his headlong course with incredible quickness and impetuosity, he all but terminated my elephant-hunting for ever. A large party of the Bechuanas who had come up yelled out simultaneously, imagining I was killed, for the elephant was at one moment almost on the top of me: however, my activity saved me, but as I dodged round the bushy trees an enormous thorn ran deep into the sole of my foot, the old Badenoch brogues, which I that day sported, being worn through; this caused me severe pain, laming me throughout the rest of the conflict.

The elephant now held on through the forest at a sweeping pace; still he was hardly out of sight when I was loaded

and in the saddle, and once more alongside. About this time I heard Isaac blazing away at another bull; but when he charged, the fellow's cowardly heart failed him, and he quickly made his appearance at a safe distance in my rear. My elephant kept crashing along at a steady pace, blood streaming from his wounds; the dogs, knocked up with fatigue and thirst, dropped astern, and it was long before I fired again, for I was afraid to dismount, and Sunday was extremely troublesome. At length I gave it him sharp right and left behind the shoulder, when he made a long charge after me, rumbling and trumpeting as before. The whole body of the Bamangwato men had now come up, and were following a short distance behind me; among these was Mollyeon, who volunteered to help; and being a very swift and active fellow, rendered me important service by holding my fidgety horse's head while I fired and loaded. I fired six broadsides in this way, the elephant charging almost every time, and pursuing us back to the main body in our rear, who fled in all directions as he approached.

The sun had now sunk behind the trees: it would very soon be dark, and, notwithstanding all he had received, the elephant did not seem much distressed. I recollected that my time was short, and therefore resolved to close with him and fire on foot. This I did, approaching very near, and sending my balls right and left in the side of the head, upon which he made a long and determined charge; but I was now thoroughly cool, for I saw he could not overtake me, and in a twinkling was loaded, and gave him both barrels behind his shoulder. Another trumpeting, which sent Sunday flying through the forest, and a terrific charge followed; this was his final one. His wounds began to tell, and he stood at bay beside a thorny tree, with the dogs, who perceived it was nearly over, barking furiously around him. Reloading, I now fired right and left at his forehead, but it was evident he could not charge again, and on receiving these shots tossed his trunk up and down, and by various signs and motions, most gratifying to the hungry natives, evinced that his end was near. My next bullet struck him behind his shoulder, and this was the last, *for as I moved round the tree beside which he stood to give*

him the other barrel, it was plain the mighty old monarch of the forest needed no more, and before I could clear the bushes, he fell heavily on his side, and drew his last breath. My feelings at this moment can only be understood by the few brother Nimrods who have had the good fortune to enjoy a similar encounter.

The natives, who were in high spirits, now flocked around the elephant, laughing and talking at a rapid pace; as to myself, I climbed on to him, and sat enthroned upon his side, which was on a level with my eyes when I was standing on the ground. In a few minutes night set in, when the natives, having illuminated the jungle with a score of fires, and formed a semicircle of bushes to windward, lay down to rest without partaking of a morsel of food, for Mutchuisho would not allow a man to put an assagai into the game until the morrow, and posted sentries to keep watch on either side of him. My dinner consisted of a slice from the temple of the elephant, which I broiled on the hot embers. In the conflict my shirt was reduced to streamers by the wait-a-bit thorns, and all the clothing that remained on me was a pair of buckskin knee breeches. This was scanty raiment on a very cold night, it being now the dead of the African winter; having collected dry grass, I spread it beside my fire, and lay down with no further covering than an old sheepskin, which I used for a saddle-cloth. Shortly after I had dropped asleep, Mutchuisho, commiserating my condition, spread an old jackal kaross over me, which, as all Bechuana garments are, was thickly tenanted by small transparent insects, which shall be nameless; these odious creatures, probably finding my skin more tender than that of the owner of the kaross, seemed resolved to enjoy a banquet while they could; and presently I awoke with my whole body so poisoned and inflamed that I felt as if attacked with a severe fever. All further rest that night was at an end, so I returned the kaross to Mutchuisho, with grateful acknowledgments for his polite intentions; and piling dry wood on the fire, which emitted a light as bright as day, I roused the slumbering Kleinboy to assist me in turning my buckskins outside in, when an animating "chasse" commenced, which terminated in the capture of about four score

of my white-currant coloured visitors. I then lit another fire, and spent the remainder of the night squatted between the two, thus imbibing caloric before and behind.

As the sun rose on the morning of the 25th, Mutchuisho gave the word to cut up the elephant, when a scene of blood, noise, and turmoil ensued, which baffles all description. Every native there, divested of his kaross and armed with an assagai, rushed to the onslaught; and in less than two hours every inch of the animal was gone, and carried by the different parties to their respective temporary locations, which they had chosen beneath the trees that grew around. This ceremony was performed in the following manner:—the rough outer skin is first removed, in large sheets, from the side of the elephant that lies uppermost, and next to it are several coats of an under skin, which being of a tough and pliant nature, is used by the natives for making water-bags, and in these they conveyed supplies of water from the nearest vley or fountain (often ten miles distant) to the elephant. This inner skin is removed with great caution, and is formed into water-bags by gathering the corners and edges, and transfixing the whole on a pointed wand. The flesh is then cut into enormous sheets from the ribs, when the hatchets come into play, with which they chop through, and remove, individually, each colossal rib. The intestines are thus laid bare; and in the removal of these the leading men take a lively interest and active part, for it is throughout and around them that the fat of the elephant is principally found.

There are few things which a Bechuana prizes so highly as fat of any description; he will go an amazing distance for a small portion of it, using it in cooking his sun-dried biltongue, and eating it with his corn. It lies in extensive layers and sheets in the elephant's inside, and the quantity obtained from a full-grown bull, in high condition, is very great. Before it can be got at, the greater part of the intestines must be removed, and to accomplish this several men eventually enter the immense cavity of his inside, where they continue excavating with their assagais, and handing the fat to their comrades outside until all is bare; while this is going on, other parties are equally active in removing the skin and flesh from the remaining

parts of the carcase. The natives have a horrid practice on these occasions of smearing their bodies, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, with the black and clotted gore; and in this anointing they assist one another, each man taking up the fill of both his hands, and spreading it over the back and shoulders of his friend. Throughout the entire proceeding there is an incessant and deafening clamour of voices and confused sounds, the crowd jostling, wrestling, and elbowing each other, in their endeavours to force their way to the venison, while the sharp and ready assagai gleams in every hand. The angry voices and gory appearance of these naked savages, combined with their excited and frantic gestures and glistening arms, presented an effect so wild and striking, that when I first beheld the scene I contemplated it in the momentary expectation of beholding one half of the gathering turn their weapons against the other.

The trunk and feet are considered delicacies, and a detachment of men are employed on these; the latter are amputated at the fetlock joint, and the trunk, which at the base is about two feet in thickness, is cut into convenient lengths. Trunk and feet are then baked, preparatory to their removal to headquarters. This is done as follows:—A party, provided with sharp pointed sticks, dig a hole in the ground for each foot and a portion of the trunk; the hole is about two feet deep, and a yard in width, and the excavated earth is embanked around the margin. This being completed, they collect an immense quantity of dry branches and trunks of trees, of which there is always a profusion scattered around, having been broken by elephants in former years; these they pile above the holes to the height of eight or nine feet, and then set fire to the heap. When these strong fires have burnt down, and the whole of the wood is reduced to ashes, the holes and the surrounding earth are heated in a high degree. Ten or twelve men then stand round the pit, and rake out the ashes with a pole about sixteen feet in length, having a hook at the end; they relieve one another in quick succession, each man running in for a few seconds, pitching the pole to his comrade and retreating, the heat being so intense that it is scarcely to be endured. When all the ashes are thus

cleared out over the bank of earth, a foot and a portion of the trunk are lifted by two athletic men, and placed in the hole. The pole is then used, and with it they shove in the heated bank of earth upon the foot, shoving and raking until it is completely buried; the hot embers are then raked into a heap above the foot, another bonfire is kindled over each, and by the time this has burnt down, the enormous foot or trunk will be found to be equally baked throughout its inmost parts. It is then taken out of the ground with pointed sticks, well beaten, and scraped with an assagai, whereby adhering particles of sand are got rid of; the outside is then pared off, and the foot transfixed with a sharp stake for convenience of carriage.

The feet thus cooked are excellent, as is also the trunk, which very much resembles buffalo's tongue. In raking the sand or earth on the foot the natives are careful not to put the red-hot embers in with it, for they would burn and destroy the meat, whereas the sand or earth protects it, imparting an even and steady heat. When the natives have cut up the elephant, and removed the large masses of flesh, &c., to their respective temporary kraals, they sit down for a little to rest and draw their breath, and for a short time smoking and snuffing are largely indulged in.

The Bechuana pipe is of a very primitive description, differing from any I had ever seen. When they wish to smoke they moisten a spot of earth, not being particular whence they obtain the water; into this earth they insert a green twig, bent into a semicircle, both ends protruding. They then knead the moist earth down with their knuckles on the twig, which they work backwards and forwards until a hole is established, when the twig is withdrawn, and one end of the aperture is enlarged with the fingers, so as to form a bowl to contain the tobacco. The pipe being thus finished and ready for immediate use, tobacco is introduced and lighted, the smoker drops on his knees, and, resting on the palms of his hands, brings his lips in contact with the mud at the small end of the hole, and inhales the grateful fumes. Large volumes of smoke are emitted through the nostrils, while a copious flow of tears from the eyes of the



smoker evinces the pleasure he enjoys. One of these pipes will serve a large party, who replenish the bowl and relieve one another in succession.

The natives, having rested, once more devote their attention to the flesh, which they make into biltongue, cutting it into thin strips from six to twenty feet in length; these strips are of the breadth and thickness of a man's two fingers. When this has been done, they sally forth with their tomahawks, and cut down a number of poles of two sorts, for uprights and cross-pieces, the former being eight feet long, and forked at one end. These are set in the ground, the cross-poles resting on the forks, adorned with endless garlands of the raw meat, which is left to hang in the sun for two or three days, at the expiration of which time it will have lost much of its weight, and be stiff and easily carried. They then remove the biltongue from the poles, and, folding it together, make it up into bundles, which are strongly lashed and secured with long strips of the tough inner bark of the thorny mimosa. Their work in the forest is now completed, and, each man placing one bundle on his head, and slinging several others across his shoulders, returns to his wife and family.

The appearance which the flesh of a single elephant exhibits when reduced to strips and suspended from the poles is truly surprising. When the skull of my elephant was ready for the axe, Mutchuisho caused a party to hew out the tusks for me—a work of great labour, and requiring considerable skill. In the present instance it was clumsily executed, the natives hacking and injuring the ivory in removing the bone with their little tomahawks; in consequence I invariably afterwards performed the task myself, using superior American hatchets, which I had provided expressly for the purpose. When the tusks had been extracted I saddled up, and started for camp, accompanied by my after-riders and a party of the natives bearing the ivory, with a supply of baked foot and trunk and a portion of the flesh; those who remained behind had appropriated all the rest, and when I left them they were quarrelling over the remnant of the skull, the marrowy bones of which were in high demand—they fought for every chip as

it flew from the axe, and chewed it raw. On our way to camp we passed through the kraal of the Bakalahari, situated in the mountain range. In the valleys they had formed considerable gardens, in which corn and water-melons were extensively grown; I was right glad to reach my comfortable camp, and get a bowl of coffee.

On the evening of the 26th men kept pouring into camp heavily laden with the flesh of the elephant, a large part of which was for Sicomy: they halted with me for the night, and resumed their march in the morning.

## CHAPTER XVI.

ELEPHANT-SPOORING WITH THE NATIVES — BULL-ELEPHANT SLAIN —  
MY INTERPRETER DISMISSED — A LIONESS BAGGED AT ONE SHOT.

ON the 27th of July I resolved to move my waggons farther east, and informed the waggon-drivers of my intention: they however raised many objections, and all but gave me a direct refusal. As I was ignorant of the position of the watering-places, and knew well that Isaac would not assist me in discovering them, I deemed it prudent in the first instance to make an excursion in that direction on horseback. I accordingly stowed some ammunition and a washing-rod in my old game-bag (to the inside of which, by the by, adhered a goodly coating of the scales of grilse and salmon, along with sundry speckled and blood stained feathers of the grouse and partridge), and having made bread and ground coffee sufficient for three days' consumption, I ordered two of my men to be ready to accompany me next morning. My interpreter's countenance never lacked a scowl; and, instead of forwarding my views, he actively employed his energies in sowing dissension between me and the natives, and inciting mutiny among my Hottentots. I discovered also that he had invariably deceived me and carefully concealed from me the districts where elephants most abounded, and I began to think that, in justice to myself, it was high time that he should be ignominiously dismissed my service.

On the 28th, as I was breakfasting, natives arrived and reported fresh spoor within a mile of camp. I therefore resolved to defer for the present the trip I had determined upon; but it so happened that this spoor led me in that direction, and was the means of introducing me to a succession of fine hunting-districts, throughout which elephant and rhinoceros were abundant. Everything being ready, I proceeded

on the tracks, accompanied by after-riders and about a hundred of the Bamangwato men (fresh parties having joined me), and found the spoor was that of a small troop of cow elephants. Mutchuisho and his party took it up in a masterly manner, and went along at a rapid pace all day, with scarcely a check, until we found the elephants. At first it led us through a gorge in the mountains, which I mentioned as having rounded on the 24th; and after this we followed it in an easterly course, skirting the base of the mountain chain. The country increased in beauty as we advanced; and, having followed the spoor some hours, it led us into a new variety of country, and, as I fancied, into a new climate. Here large trees were abundant, and the grass and leaves much greener than in the country we had left behind; we crossed the gravelly beds of two periodical rivers, and in one I observed the recent spoor of a herd of bull elephants deeply imprinted in the sand. This day the wind, which had for weeks been cold and blighting, blowing off the icebergs of the Southern Ocean, shifted to the north-east, and breathed warm and balmy upon us.

As we advanced, the passage of elephants became more and more apparent on the trees and in the earth, and late in the afternoon we reached ground where a large herd of cows had fed that morning. Here we had a short check, when Mutchuisho rated the trackers for their negligence; and, having despatched parties to try back upon the spoor, and extended others to make casts on our right and left, he leisurely ensconced himself beneath a shady tree, and proceeded, along with several of his cronies, to enjoy the luxury of taking snuff. This important ceremony having been duly performed, they began with the utmost gravity to smooth a portion of the ground before them, preparatory to casting the mystic dice which most of the Bechuanas wear strung around their necks. These dice, which are of sundry indescribable shapes, are formed of ivory, and the Bechuanas invariably appeal to them before entering upon any subject of importance, to ascertain the probability of its ultimate success. Having unstrung the dice, which are four in number, they rattle them between their hands, and drop them on the ground, when the long-headed

old men carefully study the directions of the points, and decide the merits of the case accordingly.

In the present instance the dice spoke favourably, auguring the speedy capture of an elephant; and one of the trackers at this moment coming up, and stating that his comrades had regained the spoor, we sprang to our feet, and again held on. We had scarcely proceeded half a mile when we suddenly beheld a herd of about twelve old cow elephants, some of which were accompanied by little calves, feeding high on the side of the rocky mountain, about five hundred yards to our right; the intervening ground was a dense and almost impenetrable mass of wait-a-bit thorns, averaging twenty feet in height, every inch of which was to be dreaded as the hook upon a "kill-devil." On perceiving the elephants we halted, and Mutchuisho despatched two men to windward, in the hope of driving them from the impracticable ground they occupied into the level forest where we stood; the elephants, however, were much too wide awake to leave their stronghold. On getting the wind of the men they tossed their trunks, and, wheeling about, held along the mountain side at a rapid pace, until they reached another jungle of thorns, from which all our efforts to dislodge them proved unavailing.

This jungle densely covered the sides and bottom of a wide semicircular basin or hollow in the mountains, and was throughout so close, that a man on foot could scarcely penetrate it. When the elephants started I rode hard after them, followed by my after-riders, and, not understanding the intentions of the elephants, we followed on through the mazes of the jungle in an elephant path, until we reached the centre of the thicket, when we suddenly found ourselves upon them; the dogs then ran in barking, when a general trumpeting, charging, and crashing in all directions took place, and, owing to the extremely dangerous nature of the ground, I was glad to beat a precipitate retreat.

Once more all was quiet; my dogs were jaded with the sun, and would not fight. Fancying that the elephants had gone ahead, and fearing to lose them, I again pushed on, holding the footpath as before; when crash came a second charge at  
"very elbows, and from opposite directions, accompanied

by a trumpeting which caused our ears to tingle;—we were actually in the very middle of them. The herd was extremely fierce, and, but for the dogs, not a man of us had escaped to tell the tale. Fortunately, the elephants seemed to think they intended to attack their calves, and this engrossed their whole attention; whereas, by reason of the colour of the horses on which we rode, they took us for gregarious creatures like themselves, and actually grazing our animals' haunches with their legs, left us scatheless and pursued the dogs. I seldom remember a more startling or dangerous position—it was a decided case of “De'il tak the hin'most;” spurs and jamboks were energetically plied; there was no time to select a path; so placing my head below my horse's neck and trusting to Providence, I charged through the thickest of the thorns, and presently found myself out of the way of the elephants. I know nothing which so effectually teaches a hunter the art of riding through “Vacht um bigé,” or “wait-a-bit” jungle, in an artistical manner, as hearing the trumpet of an enraged elephant about a spear's length in his wake; after a few such lessons he will have learnt to bring his breast in contact with the side of his horse's neck, his head being well under it, whereby his prominent feature will be secured, and, agitating his persuaders, he will dive through the most impracticable “wait-a-bits” with apparently as much facility as an Eton boy takes a header into the Thames at the Lion's Leap.

We got clear of the cover with very great difficulty, and gained the level forest on the lower side. By this time the natives had lined the side of the mountain above it, and were shouting and yelling in the hope of driving out the elephants; but not a man would venture in. Presently some of them came round to me, and I proposed to go in on foot, but they would not hear of it, saying that the elephants were extremely savage, and would kill me to a certainty. I then proposed that all the natives should enter the jungle in a line, and try to drive them out, but they said that no power could accomplish the point until night set in.

The animals now shifted their ground a little, forcing their way through the jungle to the higher side of the basin, so leaving the horses in charge of a native, I went round to the

line of men above. Here I commanded a fine view of the exasperated elephants, being high above them and distant about two hundred and fifty yards, and I observed that they displayed considerable cunning in their movements. Placing my rifle on a forked branch, and giving it the proper elevation, I let drive at the nearest cow, and wounded her severely; the shot reverberated through the dale, and the dogs once more ran into the midst of them, when a general charge and trumpeting ensued, that was truly terrific. They rushed after the dogs, following them up to a great distance, crashing through and upsetting the high bushy wait-a-bits and other trees like grass, and then turned and formed in two separate detachments, standing thick together; but two wicked old cows that had calves stood far out from the others, with their heads turned to us, ready to charge whatever might approach. I saw that it was extremely dangerous to attack them, but the sun was now fast sinking behind a shoulder of the mountains, so I resolved to defy all chances and enter the cover. I first, however, fired two shots at the elephants that formed the advanced piquets; both cows got it in the ribs, and finding themselves wounded, retreated to the main body, where they stood smashing the trees with rage, and, catching up volumes of red dust with their trunks, threw it in clouds above their backs. Mutchuisho and I now descended into the jungle, and crept stealthily along, listening for their breathing; they had moved to the lower side, and were standing thick together within one hundred yards of the outside. On ascertaining their position, we emerged from the cover, and followed along the outside until we were opposite them; I then stalked in within twenty yards, fired at the side of the head of the elephant that stood next to me, and before the smoke had cleared, was running for the outside of the cover at my utmost speed. The elephants held their ground; so, reloading, I again drew near, fired sharp right and left into another, and turning my back ran for it once more. Re-entering the cover a third time, I was listening which way they had gone, when, casting my eyes to the left, a noble elephant lay before me; the ball had penetrated her brain, and she had dropped dead upon the spot.

A little after this an old cow came charging after the dogs, and took up a position in the jungle close beside us; we heard her preparing for a second charge, when the natives beat a precipitate retreat, but I very rashly waited to receive her, and just as she cleared the cover let fly at her forehead. Regardless of my shot, she came down upon me at a tremendous pace, shrilly trumpeting; it was rather a near thing, for I was burdened with my rifle, rhinoceros-horn loading-rod, and my shooting-belt containing about forty rounds of ammunition. However, I was quick enough to escape her, and the instant she halted faced about, and gave her the other barrel behind the shoulder.

Night now set in, and I saw no more of the elephants; a number of them were wounded, and must have died; but I felt satisfied with the one I had secured; the natives made me more cautious than I should otherwise have been, and, had we found them at an earlier hour, I should probably have killed one half the troop. Weary and hungry, we formed our kraals and kindled fires, after which, having partaken of the elephant, I lay down to sleep.

On the 29th I sent Carollus to the waggons with instructions to bring the Bushman and all the horses, with bread, coffee, and ammunition. In the forenoon I ascended the neighbouring mountain-range, and on clearing the first ridge looked down upon a bold and romantic gorge, which here intersected it, connecting the forests on either side; far below me twined the gravelly bed of a periodical river, which in the rainy season flows in an easterly direction. In all other parts this channel was now dry, but just here, deep in the bosom of the mountains, it was covered with delicious spring water to a depth of several inches, and here the elephants had excavated sundry holes, about two feet deep, for the purpose of drinking; I descended to the water by a path they had made, and stood long contemplating the interesting spot. The bed of the river was deeply imprinted with the spoor of elephants, buffaloes, and rhinoceros, of various dates; the ravine was wide near the water, and its abrupt and rocky sides were adorned with a profusion of trees and shrubs. *A little farther down, the gorge was more confined, the river*



winding through huge perpendicular walls of rock, that raised their giant forms on both sides to a height of several hundred feet.

From the basis of these stupendous ramparts to the margin of the river on either side was a sloping bank, along which grew an avenue of picturesque acacias of enormous size and lofty stature, which stretched away in all their beauty to the sky; beneath these were the well-beaten paths of elephants, and the sides of the trees were well polished to the usual height from the ground. Leaving the river, I ascended the hills beyond, where I commanded a glorious prospect of the endless grey forests which reached as far as I could see over slightly undulating country, the faint blue outline of extensive mountain ranges bounding the landscape to the east. Descending from my elevated position, I discovered four bull buffaloes feeding in the valley far beneath me, but I left them undisturbed, and bent my steps towards the carcass of the elephant.

In the evening Carollus arrived, bringing the horses and ammunition, and accompanied by a large body of the natives. At an early hour on the 30th I started with Mutchuisha and a numerous retinue to search for elephants in an easterly direction, crossing the gravelly bed of the river Mahalapia about a mile below the gorge I had visited on the preceding day. In after years I renewed my acquaintance with the Mahalapia, when on the banks of the fair Limpopo, into which it empties itself several days' journey to the east. This was one of the loveliest spots I had seen in Southern Africa.

Here, in the bed of the river, we took up the spoor of a huge bull elephant, and having followed it a short distance through the verdant forest, started the old fellow, but no one saw him. One native heard him, but said he thought it was a rhinoceros; in half a minute, however, we discovered our mistake, and there ensued a general rush upon the spoor. Whistling to my dogs, they took up the scent and went ahead; but as I galloped after them, expecting every instant to behold the elephant, whose spoor I now saw beneath my horse's feet, an unlucky troop of camelopards dashed across

our path, and away went all the dogs, leaving me in the lurch just as I was upon the elephant. The trackers, however, soon came up, and we again held briskly on; but had not proceeded far when we entered upon ground so covered with fresh footmarks, that in their haste they overran the spoor we followed, for the natives always pressed upon the spooring party in spite of my remonstrances, and a long check was the result. Here, to add to my annoyance, another large herd of camelopards approached cantering up the wind, and dashed away before us. Old Mutchuisho now came up in a state of intense excitement, his watery eyes fixed on the ground, and his tongue in perpetual motion; he blew up the trackers right and left, who seemed to quail before his menacing aspect, and redoubled their energies in the doubtful pursuit. Presently, one of these, loudly smacking his "nether end," intimated that he had hit off the proper spoor. The Bechuanas use this peculiar signal to warn one another on various occasions. In spooring game it was invariably practised; and when a line of men were threading the mazes of the forest, each of them apprized the man behind him of any rough sticks, stones, or thorns which lay across the path, by the same friendly gesture.

We resumed the spoor at a rapid pace, with a widely extended front, and presently I heard on my left the joyous signal of the presence, "Klow;" cantering in that direction, I came full in sight of an enormous bull elephant, marching along at a free majestic pace, and in another minute was riding by his side. The horse which I bestrode on this occasion was the Cow, one of my best and steadiest shooting-horses; and the forest being tolerably suited for the sport, I was not long in finishing the elephant. I fired thirteen bullets at him, and on receiving the last two shots sharp right and left behind the shoulder, he made a rapid charge, and disappeared among the trees. Cautiously following, I found him lying in an upright position, with his two fore-legs stretched out in front of him; fancying he was still alive, I fired both barrels at his ear, but though the balls rang loudly on his venerable head, the noble elephant heeded not their force—his life had departed.

His tusks were much worn down, having been broken (probably in rocky ground) in former years. Mutchuasho appeared in the highest glee, and despatched messengers through the gorge in the mountains, the name of which is Sabié, to advise Sicomy of the death of the elephant. The chace had led me to within rifle range of the three veteran acacias I had admired in the morning; here I made a bower beneath a shady wait-a-bit thorn-tree, and encircled my fire with a hedge of the same.

I resolved to bring on my waggons to the pass of Sabié, where there was sufficient water for all my cattle, my intention being to continue hunting through the forests to the eastward, returning to Bamangwato by a different route. I however foresaw that I must give Isaac his dismissal before proposing such a measure; and accordingly rode to camp on the 1st day of August, and informed him that his valuable services could be dispensed with. I then explained to the Hottentots my future course, and having directed them to inspan and follow me to Sabié, under guidance of the natives, mounted the Old Grey, and started to return to my bower on the bank of the Mahalapia. The country between Letlochee and Sabié was almost impracticable for waggons, the forest in many parts being extremely dense, and sundry difficult ravines intervening. I did not therefore expect my people to reach their destination till the afternoon of the following day, nor did they appear until the evening of the third. The Hottentots did not seem at all to fancy the idea of following me farther, but finding there was no choice, they submitted to their fate.

At an early hour the following day I started with about sixty natives, and as we were threading the fresh spoor of two bull elephants, the dogs dashed up wind on some scent, and the forest was awakened with their music. Imagining they had found the elephants, I pressed through the thickets at my utmost speed, and as I approached heard a hoarse noise like the voice of one; but my eye sought in vain for his lofty back towering above the wait-a-bits. I then fancied it must be a buffalo, but on rounding the thick bush, behind which *my dogs* were barking, I came full in sight of an angry lioness,

which stood lashing her tail, and growling fiercely at the dogs. The moment I saw her I shouted to the natives, who were pressing forward, that it was "Tao,"\* when a headlong retreat was the result, a number of them taking refuge in the trees; I then dismounted, and, advancing to within twenty yards of the lioness, waited till she turned her head, when I fired at the back of her neck, and stretched her lifeless on the ground: the bullet passed along the spine, and, penetrating the skull, rested in her brain. It was a long time before any of the natives would venture to approach, and, when they did, their astonishment knew no bounds at beholding their formidable enemy so easily disposed of.

At an early hour on the 3rd I again held east with a large party, and took up spoor which led us in a south-easterly course, first through a verdant forest, and then over an extremely rugged ridge that stretched into another from the mountain chain. Beyond this ridge was an extensive and almost impracticable jungle of wait-a-bit thorns, and in a few minutes the dogs, winding some elephants, ran in upon them and gave tongue; a crashing and trumpeting ensued, and all the natives shouted out "Machoa" (signifying white man). With the utmost difficulty I obtained a view of one of the elephants, but perceiving it was a small cow, and knowing that if I shot her the natives would not take up spoor again for at least a couple of days, I reserved my fire; the dogs, jaded by the sun, returned to my call, and we left the elephants to their own devices.

A few minutes afterwards we discovered the fresh spoor of two enormous bull elephants, and having followed it a short distance, came upon some dung, the outside of which the sun had not yet dried, indicating that the animals were at that moment in the same valley as ourselves. Two young men were despatched in haste to ascend the beetling crags of the adjacent mountain, from which they could obtain a bird's-eye view of the surrounding country. The main body of the natives squatted on the ground, and I sat down to eat some bread and elephant, and take a drink of water. I had scarcely

\* "Tao," the native name for lion.

time to finish my luncheon when the men returned breathless with excitement to report that they had discovered the elephants browsing in a grove within a quarter of a mile of us, and on clearing a bushy tree, under cover of which I had approached, I beheld two of the finest elephants in Africa standing broadside on within fifty yards of me. The largest had one of his tusks broken short off by the lip; I therefore chose his comrade, which carried a very long and perfect pair. I had hard work with this elephant, and the sun was under before I laid him low.

On the 4th I joined my waggons, which were drawn up in the romantic gorge of Sabié; and as near as might be to the water. Here I found that drunkenness and disorder had prevailed during my absence; my chests were broken open, the cap-tents of both my waggons most seriously damaged, oxen had been lost, and horses ridden off their legs in search of them. Mr. Kleinboy had been the chief delinquent, and under the influence of the liquor, and anxious to distinguish himself, had resolved to try his hand in hunting the giraffe. Mounting Colesberg, my favourite steed, and armed with one of my 80-guinea rifles, he had sped through the forest he knew not whither, and eventually becoming bewildered, lost himself entirely. In this condition he was fortunately discovered by a party of Bakalahari, who conducted him safely to camp.

I now knew how to make myself tolerably comfortable in the field, and from this date seldom went in quest of elephants without the following impedimenta, viz., a large blanket, folded and secured before my saddle, and in two leather sacks, carried by the natives, for which service I remunerated them with beads, were packed a flannel shirt, warm trousers and a woollen nightcap, spare ammunition and washing-rod, coffee, bread, sugar, pepper and salt, dried meat, a wooden bowl, and a teaspoon. They also carried my coffee-kettle, two calabashes of water, two American axes, and two sickles to cut grass for my bed and for my horses. My after-rider carried extra ammunition and a spare rifle; my own personal appointments consisted of a wide-awake hat, secured under my chin by "rheimpys," a coarse shirt, sometimes a kilt, sometimes a

pair of buckskin knee-breeches, and a pair of "veldtschoens," or home-made shoes. I entirely discarded coat, waistcoat, and neckcloth, and always hunted with my arms bare; my heels were armed with a pair of powerful persuaders, and from my left wrist depended by a double rheimpy an equally persuasive sea-cow jambok.

Around my waist I wore two leathern girdles. The smaller of these discharged the duty of suspenders, and from it on my left side depended a plaited rheimpy, eight inches in length, forming a loop in which dangled my powerful loading-rod, made out of a solid piece of rhinoceros horn. The larger girdle was my shooting-belt; this was of broad leather, on which were fastened four separate compartments made of otter-skin, with flaps to button over of the same material; the first of these held my percussion-caps, the second a large powder-flask, the third and fourth, which had divisions in them, contained balls and patches, two sharp clasp-knives, a compass, and flint and steel. In this belt I also had a loading-mallet, of rhinoceros-horn; this and the powder-flask were each secured to the belt by long rheimpys. Last, but not least, I usually carried in my right hand my double-barrelled two-grooved rifle, my favourite weapon. This, however, I subsequently found was not the proper tool for a mounted man, especially when quick loading is necessary; for when a two-grooved rifle has been once or twice discharged, the bullet requires considerable power to drive it home, which is extremely inconvenient. Nothing can surpass a double-barrelled smooth bore for practical utility. I consider that no regiment in the service was more effectually armed than my own old corps, the Cape Mounted Rifles, who were furnished with short double-barrelled smooth-bored pieces, carrying a ball of twelve to the pound, and having stout percussion-locks; a weapon of this description is the best with which to war against the larger game of Africa. To accelerate loading, the hunter ought to have his balls stitched up in their patches, and well greased before taking the field; I found this a great convenience, and after a little practice could load and fire in the saddle, although riding in rough ground at a *swingeing gallop*.

On the evening of the 12th a herald from Sicomy stood up in the centre of my camp, and loudly proclaimed it was the king's orders that on the following day every man should return to head-quarters; and accordingly all hands shouldered their baggage and forsook me. I could not rightly divine the cause of this mysterious command, but attributed it to some plotting scheme of Isaac's, who I understand was living with Sicomy. I saw very plainly that Mutchuisho was against the move, and, in consideration of his services, begged his acceptance of several considerable presents, and also sent some to the king. On parting, Mutchuisho promised shortly to return, and informed me that he had instructed a party of Bakalahari to assist me in my hunting during his absence.







HEADON'S CHARGE OF A WOUNDED ELEPHANT

## CHAPTER XVII.

MARCH FROM SABIE — GLORIOUS ELEPHANT SHOOTING — SABLE ANTELOPE — TWO-GROOVED RIFLE BURSTS — DEATH OF COLESBERG.

I REMAINED at Sabié, hunting elephant and rhinoceros with various success, till the morning of the 22nd of August, when I started for Mangmaluky. On the march I shot a white rhinoceros in the act of charging down a rocky face, which, pitching upon his head, described a most tremendous somersault, coming down among the stones and bushes with overwhelming violence.

On the 27th we came upon a large extent of burning grass, which the Bakalahari kindle to make the young herbage spring up with greater facility, and during the day discovered a herd of bull elephants quietly browsing on the side of a hill, two hundred yards to windward of us.

I started them with an unearthly yell, and, selecting the finest, fired both barrels behind his shoulder, when he instantly turned upon me, and in his impetuous career charged head foremost against a large bushy tree, which he sent flying before him high in the air, coming down at the same moment violently on his knees. He thus met the raging fire, and wheeled to the right-about.

I followed, loading and firing as fast as could be, sometimes at the head, sometimes behind the shoulder, until the elephant's fore-quarters were severely punished, notwithstanding which he continued to hold stoutly on, leaving the grass and branches of the forest scarlet in his wake.

On one occasion he endeavoured to escape by charging desperately amid the thickest of the flames; but this did not avail him, for I was soon alongside, and blazed away at him until I began to think he was ball-proof. Having fired thirty-five rounds with my two-grooved rifle, I opened upon him with the Dutch six-pounder; and when forty bullets

had perforated his hide, he began for the first time to show symptoms of exhaustion. Poor old fellow ! it was now all over with him ; so I resolved to expend no further ammunition. Throughout the chase he repeatedly cooled his body with large quantities of water, which he ejected from his trunk over his back and sides ; and just as the pangs of death came over him, he stood trembling violently beside a thorny tree, and kept pouring water into his mouth until he died, when he pitched heavily forward, with the whole weight of his fore-quarters resting on the points of his tusks. He lay in this posture for several seconds, but the amazing pressure of the carcass was more than the head was able to support ; he had fallen with his head so short under him that the tusks received little assistance from his legs. Something must give way. The strain on the mighty tusks was fair ; they did not, therefore, yield ; but the portion of his head in which the tusk was imbedded, extending a long way above the eye, yielded and burst with a muffled crash. The tusk was thus free, and turned right round in his head, so that a man could draw it out, and the carcass fell over and rested on its side. This was a very first-rate elephant, and the tusks he carried were long and perfect.

On the 28th I saddled up, and rode for the waggons, and at an early hour on the 29th, while cantering along through the forest, came suddenly in full view of one of the loveliest quadrupeds which graces this fair creation—an old buck of the sable antelope, the rarest and most beautiful animal in Africa. It is large and powerful, partaking considerably of the nature of the ibex ; its back and sides are of glossy black, beautifully contrasting with the belly, which is white as driven snow. The horns are upwards of three feet in length, and bend strongly back with a bold sweep, reaching nearly to the haunches.

This animal was first discovered by Captain Harris, of the Bombay Engineers, in 1837. The one now before me was the first I had seen ; and I shall never forget the sensations I experienced on beholding a sight so thrilling to the sportsman's eye ; he stood with a small troop of pallahs right in our path, and had unfortunately detected us before we saw him. Shouting to my pack, I galloped after him ; but the day was close and warm, and the dogs had lost their spirit.

**My horse being an indifferent one, soon lost ground, and the beautiful creature, gaining a rocky ridge, was quickly beyond my reach, and vanished for ever from my view. I sought in vain to close my eyelids that night, for the image of the sable antelope was still before me.**

On the 31st we held for Towannie, a strong fountain in the gravelly bed of a periodical river; and here I came full in view of the tallest and largest bull elephant I had ever seen. He stood broadside to me, at upwards of one hundred yards; and, halting my horse, I fired at his shoulder, and secured him with a single shot. The ball caught him high upon the shoulder-blade, rendering him instantly dead lame.

I resolved to devote a short time to the contemplation of this noble elephant before I should lay him low. It was, indeed, a striking sight; and as I gazed upon the stupendous veteran of the forest, I thought of the red deer which I loved to follow on my own native hills, and felt that, though the Fates had driven me to a distant land, it was a good exchange which I had made, for I was now a chief over boundless forests, which yielded unspeakably more noble and exciting sport.

Having admired the elephant for some time, I made some experiments for vulnerable points, and, approaching very near, fired several bullets at different parts of his enormous skull. These did not seem to affect him in the slightest; he only acknowledged the shots by a "salaam-like" movement of his trunk, with the point of which he gently touched the wound with a striking and peculiar action. Surprised and shocked to find that I was only tormenting and prolonging the sufferings of the noble beast, which bore his trials with such dignified composure, I resolved to finish the proceeding with all possible despatch; accordingly I opened fire upon him behind the shoulder, and fired six shots with the two-grooved, which must eventually have proved mortal, but as yet he evinced no visible distress; after this I fired three shots at the same part with the Dutch six-pounder. Large tears now trickled from his eyes, which he slowly shut and opened; his colossal frame quivered convulsively, and, falling on his side, he expired. The tusks of this elephant were beautifully arched, and the *heaviest I had yet met with, averaging 90 lbs. weight apiece.*

In case any fair reader may misinterpret my motive for making experiments to find out the most vulnerable points, I beg them to remark that my object was *not* to torture the animal, but to put an end to its life and pain in the quickest manner possible—I had often lamented having to inflict so many wounds on the noble animals before they fell.

On the 1st of September we saddled our steeds and steered our course for Mangmaluky. Cantering along the base of a mountain range, I started two klipspringers, which went bounding up the hill-side with the elasticity of an India-rubber ball, selecting for their path the most prominent points of the large fragments of rock. I shot one of these, being the first of the species I had killed, though in subsequent years, while hunting the sable antelope, I secured a number of fine specimens. This darling little antelope frequents precipitous rocky hills and mountains, and bounds along over the broken masses of rock with the most extraordinary ease and agility: it may often be seen perched, like a chamois, on the sharp pinnacle of some rock or stone, with its four feet drawn close up together. Its hoofs are different from those of other antelopes, being suited solely for rocky ground, and are so formed that the weight of the animal rests upon their tips. On looking down a precipice I have often seen two or three of this interesting quadruped lying together on a large flat mass of rock, and sheltered from the power of the noonday sun by the friendly shade of some sandal-wood or other mountain-tree. They are about half the size of the Scottish roebuck, whose winter coat the texture of their hair very much resembles, but it is stiffer, and of a yellower colour.

On the afternoon of the 2nd, as I was sitting in my waggon writing up my journal, a koodoo charged past me, closely followed by a pack of hungry wild dogs, which maintained their position, although all my kennel joined them in the chase, and, holding on, the wild dogs killed the koodoo just as it reached the water where my oxen drank. On the 3rd I followed the spoor of four bull elephants for many miles. I was fortunate enough to secure the finest, after a severe and dangerous conflict, during which, on three separate occasions, I narrowly escaped destruction. The sun was powerful throughout the

day, and summer was rapidly advancing. The trees were budding and putting forth leaves, which loaded the passing breeze with a sweet and balmy fragrance. In low-lying districts the young grass had already commenced to shoot forth its tender blades, and all nature seemed to pant for the grateful rains to robe herself in her mantle of summer verdure.

In the evening I laved in the fountain my sunburnt eyes, which were sore and irritated from the constant strain attendant upon spooring. As the sun went down, the number of the feathered tribe that visited the fountains was truly surprising: turtle-doves and extremely small long-tailed pigeons were most abundant. I also observed four distinct varieties of partridge; and guinea-fowls attended in flocks of from twenty to sixty. On the 4th, I was occupied, from early dawn until the sun was under, in cleaning the skull and hewing out the tusks of my bull elephant, and on the following day returned to camp with a party of Bakalahari bearing them upon their shoulders. On the 6th I again took the field with about forty natives, and falling in with two white rhinoceroses, one of which carried an unusually long horn, was induced to give her chase, and by hard riding overtook and finished her with four shots behind the shoulder.

In the afternoon I was engaged for three or four hours combating with a vicious elephant, which I finished with thirty-five bullets in the shoulder, in an impracticable jungle of wait-a-bit thorns. The barrel of my rifle burst with a terrific explosion at the last round, sending the locks and half the stock flying right and left, and very nearly sending me to "the land of the leal." I, however, received no further damage than a slight burn on my left arm, and the loss for many days of the use of my left ear, a fragment of the barrel having whizzed close past it. The loss of my trusty two-grooved rifle, in such a remote corner of the world, was irreparable; it was my mainstay; and as I thought of the many services it had performed for me in the hour of need, I felt quite overcome. I still had, however, the double-barrelled Moore and Purday rifles, carrying sixteen to the pound, and set about casting hardened bullets to suit them; but I had now the mortification *to discover that all the solder I had brought with me had*

mysteriously vanished by some underhand transaction betwixt my followers and Sicomy. I was thus reduced to the extremity of melting the contents of my old military canteen to harden the bullets, viz., the tray of the snuffers, the spoons, candlesticks, teapots, and two drinking-cups, which I found were admirably suited for this purpose.

In the evening I had the pleasure to behold my old friend Mutchuisho walk into my camp, followed by a numerous party of the natives. He seemed glad to see me, and we at once arranged to make an expedition to the eastward on the following day. Accordingly, on the morning of the 9th, we continued our course till sun-down without finding fresh spoor, when we halted for the night. On the morrow I again held on through boundless forests, till I found myself in a country which I had not hitherto visited.

In the afternoon we reached a small vley, where five first-rate bull-elephants had drunk on the preceding evening. Johannus and I went off on the spoor at a rapid pace, but I had not the slightest expectation of overtaking them, for our horses began to evince symptoms of distress; and, despairing of success, I was just going to pull up, when I heard Johannus exclaim, "Sir, sir, dar stand illa!" and, looking before me, I beheld five enormous old bull elephants walking slowly along. They seemed heated by the pace at which they had retreated, and were now refreshing themselves with large volumes of water, which, having taken into their capacious stomachs, they showered back upon their bodies with their trunks. I had never before obtained so satisfactory a view of a herd of bulls; they really looked wondrous large. It is a heart-stirring sight to behold one bull elephant; but when five gigantic old fellows are walking in front of you, and you feel that you can ride up and vanquish whichever you fancy, it is so overpoweringly exciting that it almost takes a man's breath away. But it was now near sunset, and too late to part with any breath for a single moment. Spurring my horse, therefore, I was in the middle of them, closely followed by Johannus, and in a twinkling the finest bull had received the contents of the Moore and Purday behind the shoulder. On receiving *the twenty-fourth* shot, at duelling distance, the poor fellow

stood trembling violently for several seconds, and then fell heavily forward on his tusks, after which he rolled over and rested on his side.

On the morrow I went in quest of another herd, accompanied by Mutchuishi and a small party, and on the second day came up with them and bagged an old bull whose tusks were the stoutest I had ever seen.

After a most weary and toilsome spoor of two days I cast loose the steeds at earliest dawn on the 13th, and soon after we heard the hoarse cry of an elephant within half a mile of us.

It is extraordinary how soon the mind accustoms itself to everything, good or bad. There I sat eating my breakfast, with a troop of princely elephants feeding within a few minutes' ride of me, with as much indifference as if I were going woodcock-shooting—certainly not half so anxious about the matter as I usually was when taking my breakfast on a fine May morning, with a southerly wind, before starting to fish my native rivers. This indifference was probably owing to the reduced state of my system from improper diet and constant toil. The troop was composed of three old bulls, two of which carried stumpy and broken tusks.

On a subsequent evening I bowled over another elephant with a splendid pair of tusks, and returned to camp, where, to my utter horror, I found my favourite Colesberg dangerously ill. Guessing what it was, I bled him freely, but to no purpose. Finding him worse on the morrow, I bled him again, but before midday he died in great pain, and shortly after life had departed a copious discharge of white foam issued from his nostrils, by which I knew that his illness was the African distemper. This bitter scourge of the African sportsman prevails throughout every district of the interior during the greater part of the year. At no season is the hunter's stud exempt from its ravages; it is most prevalent, however, during the summer months, generally commencing with the early rains. There are various opinions among the horse-breeders of the colony regarding its prevention and cure; but notwithstanding all that has been said and done, the subject still remains wrapped in utter mystery. The distemper rarely visits a country adjacent to the sea, and is also unusual in



mountain districts. In proportion as the traveller advances from the sea, so will he find the sickness prevalent. In all years it is not alike, and every fifth or seventh it ravages the farms on the frontier, where a farmer often loses from fifty to a hundred horses in a single season. Bleeding is generally believed to act as a preventive. When a horse is attacked with it, he almost invariably comes up to his master's waggon, or the door of his dwelling-place, as if soliciting assistance in his distress, and when led away to a distance, unless he be secured, the poor animal will continue to return to his master's dwelling. This was the case with my much-lamented free and fiery Colesberg.

I had also the mortification to observe that the "Immense Brute" exhibited similar symptoms, on which I had him caught and bled him freely. About midday I trekked till sundown in a south-westerly course, steering for the mountains of Bamangwato.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

TURN MY WAGGONS TOWARDS THE COLONY — ELEPHANT-SHOOTING —  
RAINY SEASON COMMENCES — LEAVE THE LAND OF ELEPHANTS.

HAVING so far succeeded in the object of my expedition, and both my waggons being now heavily laden with the tusks of elephants, a large collection of the spoils of the chase, and a number of other interesting curiosities, I at length resolved once more to turn my face towards the distant dwellings of my countrymen; but on the 23rd of September, though harassed in my mind, and fearful of losing all my horses if I did not speedily depart, I yielded to the persuasions of Mutchuisho, and once more took the field to follow the spoor of two bull elephants, reported to have visited a distant fountain. Before starting, I gave Johannus my fleam, and a hasty lesson in the art of bleeding, with instructions to bleed copiously any of my stud evincing the slightest indications of distemper. We held an easterly course, and at sundown on the second day I bagged a white rhinoceros and a fine old bull elephant, beside whose carcass we bivouacked as usual.

On the forenoon of the 25th I held for camp, accompanied by only one attendant. It was a glorious day, with a cloudy sky, and the wind blew fresh off the Southern Ocean. Having ridden some miles in a northerly direction, and crossed the broad and gravelly bed of a periodical river, we entered an extensive grove of picturesque cameel-dorn trees, clad in young foliage of the most delicious green. On gaining a gentle eminence about a mile beyond this grove, I looked forth upon an extensive hollow and beheld two first-rate old bull elephants. This was a fine look-out, the country appeared to be favourable for an attack, and I was followed by Wolf and Bonteberg, both tried and serviceable dogs with elephants. Owing to the pace *at which I had been riding*, both dogs and horses were out of

breath, so I resolved not to attack immediately, but to follow slowly, holding them in view.

The elephants were proceeding right up the wind, and the distance betwixt us was about five hundred yards. I advanced quietly towards them, and had gone about half way, when, casting my eyes to my right, I beheld a whole herd of tearing bull elephants standing thick together on a wooded eminence within three hundred yards of me; these elephants were almost to leeward. Now the correct thing to do was to kill the best in each troop, which I accomplished in the following manner:—I gave the large herd my wind, upon which they instantly tossed their trunks aloft, “a moment snuffed the tainted gale,” and, wheeling about, charged right down wind, crashing through the jungle in dire alarm. My object was to endeavour to select the finest bull, and hunt him to a distance from the other troop before I should commence to play upon his hide. Stirring my steed, therefore, I galloped forward, and in the wake of the retreating elephants, tracing their course by the red dust which they raised and left in clouds behind them.

Presently emerging into an open glade, I came full in view of the mighty game; it was a truly glorious sight: there were, with one exception, nine or ten full-grown, first-rate bulls, and all of them carried very long, heavy, and perfect tusks. Their first panic being over, they reduced their pace to a free, majestic walk, and followed one leader in a long line, exhibiting an appearance so grand and striking that any description, however brilliant, must fail to convey to the mind of the reader an adequate idea of the reality. Increasing my pace, I shot alongside the elephants, at the same time riding well out, the better to obtain an inspection of their tusks. It was a difficult matter to decide which of the herd I should select, for every one of them seemed larger than his neighbour; but, on account of the extraordinary size and beauty of his tusks, I eventually pitched upon a patriarchal bull (which, as is usual with the heaviest, brought up the rear), and separated him from his comrades, driving him in a northerly direction. There is a peculiar art in driving an elephant in the particular course which you may fancy, and, simple as it may seem, it *nevertheless* requires the hunter to know what he is about. It is

widely different from driving in an eland, which also demands judicious riding: if you approach too near your elephant or shout to him, a furious charge will certainly ensue; whilst, on the other hand, if you give him too wide a berth, the chances are that you will lose him in the jungle, which, notwithstanding his size, is a very simple matter, and, if once lost sight of, it is more than an even bet that the hunter will never again obtain a glimpse of him. The ground being favourable, Kleinboy called to me to commence the attack, remarking very prudently that he was probably making for some jungle of wait-a-bits, where we might eventually lose him; I continued, however, to reserve my fire until I had hunted him to what I considered a safe distance from the two old fellows we first discovered.

At length closing with him, I dared him to charge, which he instantly did in fine style, and as he pulled up in his career I yelled to him a note of bold defiance. It was thus the fight began, and, the ground being still favourable, I opened fire, and in about a quarter of an hour twelve of my bullets were lodged in his fore quarters. He now evinced strong symptoms of approaching dissolution, and stood catching up the dust with the point of his trunk and throwing it in clouds above and around him. At such a moment it is extremely dangerous to approach an elephant on foot, for although nearly dead, he can muster strength to make a charge with great impetuosity. Being anxious to finish him, I dismounted from my steed, and, availing myself of the cover of a gigantic nwana-tree, whose diameter was not less than ten feet, I got within twenty yards, and gave it him sharp right and left behind the shoulder. These two shots wound up the proceeding; for on receiving them he backed stern foremost into the cover, and soon after I heard him fall over heavily; but, alas! the sound was accompanied by a sharp crack, and, on running forward, I found him lying dead, with his lovely tusk, which lay under, snapped through the middle.

I did not tarry long for an inspection of the elephant, but, mounting my horse, at once set off to follow on the spoor of the two old fellows I had first seen, and had not gone far when, *casting my eyes to the right*, I beheld within a quarter of a

mile of me a herd of eight or ten cow elephants, with calves, peacefully browsing on a sparsely wooded knoll. Leaving these ladies to enjoy their dinner, we followed the spoor at a rapid pace, the native who led the party being the best tracker in Bamangwato ; and I was glad to see that the elephants had not been alarmed, for their course was strewn with branches which they had chewed as they slowly fed along. At length we emerged into an open glade, and clearing a grove of thorny mimosas, came full in sight of one of them ; cautiously advancing, I next discovered his comrade, standing in a thicket of low wait-a-bits, within a hundred and fifty yards of me ; they were both first-rate old bulls, and the first displayed to my delighted eyes a pair of the most beautiful and perfect tusks.

Regaining my horse, from which I had dismounted, I advanced towards this elephant, which, when within forty yards of me, walked slowly on before me, his huge ears gently flapping, and entirely concealing me from his view. Inclining to the left, I slightly increased my pace, and walked past him within sixty yards, upon which he observed me for the first time ; but probably mistaking "Sunday" for a hartebeest, he continued his course with his eye upon me, but showed no symptoms of alarm. The natives had requested me to endeavour, if possible, to hunt him towards the water, which lay in a northerly direction, and this I resolved to do ; having advanced a little, I gave him my wind, when he instantly backed into the bushes, holding his head high and right to me. Riding slowly on, I described a semicircle to obtain a shot at his shoulder, and, halting my horse, fired from the saddle ; he got it in the shoulder-blade, and, as I silently continued my course, he still stood gazing at me in utter astonishment. Two of my dogs were now slipped by the natives, and in another moment they were barking around him. I shouted loudly to encourage them and perplex the elephant, who seemed puzzled to know what to think of us, and, shrilly trumpeting, charged headlong after Bill and Flam ; again, he backed into the thicket, charged once more, and then made clean away, holding the course I wanted. But I was not long in coming up with him, and, running in, gave him two fine shots behind the *shoulder* ; the dogs also gave tongue, and the consequence was

a terrific charge, his tormentors at once making for their master, and bringing the elephant right upon me. I had no time to gain my saddle, but ran for my life; the dogs, fortunately, took after Sunday, who, alarmed by the trumpeting, dashed frantically away, and, though in the midst of a most dangerous affray, I could not help laughing.

Recovering my horse, I returned to the wounded elephant, and plainly saw that he was dying; but I continued firing to hasten his death, and when that took place, had the intense mortification to find, on going up to him, that one of his matchless tusks was broken short off by the lip. This was a glorious day's sport: I had bagged in one afternoon probably the two finest bull elephants in Bamangwato, and, had it not been for the destruction of the two largest pair of tusks I had obtained that season, my triumph would have been great and unalloyed.

At an early hour on the following day, leaving Kleinboy with the natives to look after the ivory, I set out with two men, to show them where the other elephant lay, and thence continue my way to camp.

The weather had hitherto been favourable, little rain having fallen since I first entered the country. At length, however, the wet season was at hand, and we were constantly visited by the most appalling thunderstorms, accompanied by torrents of rain, which filled the hitherto dry nullahs and gravelly watercourses with running streams, and converted the parched forest and arid plains into blossoming verdure and grassy meads. While hunting, I was often overtaken by the rain, and on these occasions compelled the natives to erect for me a bothy, or temporary hut; it was a duty they often were reluctant to perform, but I invariably managed to gain my point by explaining to them that, if my guns and powder were exposed to the wet, they would die, for I could kill no more elephants for them.

When attended by a large party, the erection of a good substantial hut was a simple and easy proceeding, and was accomplished in the following manner:—One party, armed with tomahawks, went in quest of long forked poles, which they cut in lengths of ten feet; a second party gathered green brushwood, and the third collected a large quantity of long dry

grass, which they tore out of the ground by the roots. The poles were set up in a circular position, the forked ends meeting and resting against one another overhead, then the brushwood was tightly interlaced between the poles, leaving a small low aperture for the door, and the fabric was effectually thatched with the long grass, the conical summit being usually crowned either with an enormous ear or a portion of the hide of an elephant. Such was my habitation during the remainder of this and all the subsequent seasons that I hunted among the Bechuana tribes. But it often happened that I had no other roof above me than the vaulted canopy of heaven, and that my placid slumbers were rudely disturbed by rain falling like a water-spout on my face ; this was extremely disagreeable, more especially when it came down so heavily as to preclude the possibility of maintaining our usual watch-fires. In weather like this the prowling tyrant of the forest is ever most active in his search for prey, and our ears were occasionally greeted with the deep-toned voices of troops of lions, as, attracted by the smell of our game, they prowled around our encampment.

I continued hunting to the eastward of Bamangwato until the 3rd of October, during which time I added four other noble elephants, besides rhinoceroses and other animals, to my already satisfactory list of game. It is about this latitude that the traveller will first meet with the gigantic *nwana*, which is decidedly the most striking and wonderful tree among the thousands which adorn the South African forests. It is chiefly remarkable on account of its extraordinary size, actually resembling a castle or tower more than a forest-tree. Throughout the country of Bamangwato the average circumference of these trees was from thirty to forty feet ; but on subsequently extending my researches in a north-easterly direction, throughout the more fertile forests which clothe the boundless tracts through which the fair Limpopo winds, I daily met with specimens of this extraordinary tree averaging from sixty to a hundred feet in circumference, and maintaining this thickness to a height from twenty to thirty feet, when they diverge into numerous goodly branches, which seem to terminate with a peculiar suddenness. The wood of this tree is soft and utterly *unserviceable* ; the shape of the leaf is similar to that of the

sycamore-tree, but its texture partakes more of the fig-leaf; its fruit is a nut, which in size and shape resembles the egg of the swan.

A remarkable fact, in connexion with these trees, is the manner in which they are disposed throughout the forest. They are found standing singly, or in rows, invariably at considerable distances from one another, as if planted by the hand of man; and from their wondrous size and unusual height (for they always tower high above their surrounding compeers), they convey the idea of being strangers or interlopers on the ground they occupy.

My oxen, having done little else than feed and rest themselves for several months, were now full of spirit and in fine condition, and rattled along before my heavily laden waggons, over rugged hills and through the trackless mazes of the forest, at a rapid and willing pace, so that on the evening of the 4th of October I once more formed my encampment at Lesausau, in the Bamangwato Mountains.

Here I was quickly welcomed by Sicomy, who visited me in company with a numerous body of his tribe. He expressed himself much gratified at seeing me return in safety from the dangerous pursuit in which I had been occupied, and his Majesty was pleased to compliment me on my extraordinary success and skill in hunting, observing that the medicine of the white man must indeed be strong.

In the course of the evening he amused me with the quaintness of his questions, asking me if my father and mother were alive, how many brothers and sisters I had, if the flocks and herds of my king were extremely abundant, and if his subjects were more numerous than his own. On informing him that our chief was a woman, he seemed much tickled by the information; but when I said that her subjects were as numerous as the locusts, he looked round on his warriors with an evident grin of disbelief, and then inquired of me if all my countrymen could vanquish the elephants as easily as I did. This was a puzzler: so I replied that I could not say, but I knew that the hearts of all my nation were very strong, like the heart of the lion when his cubs are small; the whole assembly was greatly moved by this bright remark, and a general murmur of surprise



and admiration extended through the dusky ranks as each man repeated it to his neighbour. Old Mutchuisho understood my gibberish better than any of the rest, and acted in the capacity of interpreter between me and the king, my attainments in the language being as yet but limited. Mutchuisho now intimated to me that two friends of Sicomy's, with their two attendants, wished to accompany me to the colony in the capacity of cattle-herds, who promised at the same time to make themselves generally useful in the way of collecting firewood and carrying venison home to the waggons; to this proposal I fortunately agreed, and the four aspirants came forward and were duly introduced to me. The names of these four Bechuanas were Mollyee, Mollyeon, Kapain, and Kuruman: the two former belonged to the aristocracy, and were old friends of mine, having often assisted me in the field. These men agreed to serve me faithfully as far as the sea and back again to the country of their chief, in consideration of which I promised on my part to reward them with a cow and a musket each.

Mollyee and Mollyeon were brothers; they were tall, active-looking savages, with large, bright, sparkling eyes, and a pleasing cast of features. Kapain was a short, thickset, noisy individual, remarkable for his ugliness, and was the funniest fellow in all Bamangwato. Kuruman was a good-natured boy of about sixteen years of age; his face was prepossessing, resembling that of a girl more than the sex to which he belonged. I entertained Sicomy with stewed meat and coffee, and he and his retinue remained that night in my encampment. At an early hour on the morrow I obtained sundry fine tusks and some good specimens of native arms and costume in barter for beads, ammunition, and other articles. On inquiring of the king what had become of Isaac, he said that he had long since returned to Kuruman in company with a son of "old Seretse," a Bechuana of distinction residing in the vicinity of that place. This individual, whose name, being translated, signifies "*mud*," is remarkable for his bitterness against the advancement of the Christian religion and for the number of his progeny. Bidding adieu to Sicomy at midday on the 5th, I continued my march for Corriebely, which I reached about noon on the

following day. I was accompanied, as usual, by a number of the natives, in the hope of obtaining a supply of flesh, elephants being reported to have revisited Massouey. Here I dug up a large quantity of lead, I had interred in a hole beneath the ashes of my fire, before recrossing the mountains of Bamangwato. On reaching Massouey, and examining the fountain, I sought in vain for the tracks of elephants; the natives, nevertheless, declared that one or two herds were still to be met with in the district, which I felt inclined to credit; and this report turned out to be correct, for on the following day I succeeded in bagging a whole herd of eight bull and cow elephants, after a most exciting chase. The natives were overjoyed at my success, and frequently drew their hands across their mouth, a gesture commonly made use of by them when a "clean sweep" (as in the present instance) had been made, either in the chase or in their combats with each other.

I continued hunting at Massouey till the 12th, when, bidding a long farewell to the land of elephants, I inspanned, and marched upon Lepeby, which I reached at an early hour on the following day. When last I visited this fine fountain the game came to drink at it in numerous herds, but now not an animal of any kind, with the exception of a few rhinoceroses, was to be seen. This I always found to be the case at the fountains during the summer months, when the game are very independent of water, owing to the more abundant moisture contained in the young grass. In the forenoon I went bird-nesting among the reeds which grew around the fountain; hundreds of birds resembling the redpole were busy building their grassy nests, which they ingeniously suspend between the tops of the reeds. I also found two nests of the water-hen, containing eggs, in the rushes, which, with the nests, exactly corresponded with those in Scotland. Two beautifully painted wild geese, an egret, or white heron, and about twenty teal, were so tame that they permitted me to approach within a few yards of them.

At an early hour on the 16th I trekked for Boötlonamy, which I reached at sundown the same evening, and drew up my waggons under an impenetrable grove of picturesque mi-

mosas, gaily decked with a profusion of highly scented yellow blossoms, brightly contrasting with their summer vestment of delicious green. Here I continued hunting for several days, and enjoyed excellent sport, daily securing fine specimens of the different varieties of game frequenting the district. On one occasion I started a secretary from off her nest, to which, from the denseness of the thorns, I with much difficulty cut my way; the eggs were the size and shape of a turkey's, and the colour of a buzzard's.

On the forenoon of the 19th we were visited by a most appalling thunder-storm; it burst close over my head with a report so sudden and tremendous, that I involuntarily trembled, and the sweat ran down my brow. The lightning fairly pained my eyes, and seemed so near, that I fancied every moment it must strike the waggons, which would certainly have proved extremely inconvenient, as 300 lbs. of gunpowder were stowed in one of them beneath my bed. The storm passed away at sundown, having exquisitely purified the atmosphere, while the grateful earth and fragrant forest emitted a perfume of overpowering sweetness. Sauntering out with my rifle I shot a couple of shaggy old brindled gnocs, firing right and left. The storm set in again about ten P.M. with thunder and lightning, which continued throughout the greater part of the night.

## CHAPTER XIX.

COLONIAL SERVANTS DESERT — MELANCHOLY ANTICIPATIONS —  
ARRIVE AT DR. LIVINGSTONE'S.

I HAD now arrived at a period of considerable importance in my expedition, when an event occurred which caused me a world of trouble and anxiety; it was nevertheless finally beneficial in its results, as it taught me what difficulties a man may surmount when he is pressed by adversity, and also made me an accomplished waggon-driver. I allude to my being abandoned by all my colonial servants, with the exception of Ruyter, the little Bushman. This unmanly and dastardly proceeding was, I believe, mainly owing to their despair of succeeding in bringing the waggons safely across the sandy deserts intervening betwixt me and the distant missionary station at Bakatla, on account of the broken state of one of the axletrees of my travelling waggon. Kleinboy, in one of his drunken fits, had driven it against a tree with such violence that one of the wooden arms of the fore axletree was cracked right across, so that little now held the wheel beside the linchpin and the iron skein. I had remarked on the 22nd there was something unusual on the minds of my followers, for none of them could look me in the face; and on the 23rd of October, when lying asleep in my waggon, a little before the day dawned, Ruyter awoke me, to report that my four Hottentots had decamped during the night; he said that each of them had taken with him a large bundle of biltongue or sun-dried meat, and tried hard to prevail on him to accompany them. This was a startling announcement, for I had barely enough hands to perform the work when they were with me, and the four savages from Bamangwato, like myself, were quite unaccustomed to the laborious and intricate art of *waggon leading* and driving, and the *inspanning* and *outspanning* of oxen. Imagining that the Hottentots would

not persevere in so rash a measure, and that they would assuredly change their minds and return to their master when they reflected on the step they had taken, I did not endeavour to overtake them, but employed the morning in stowing the waggons, lashing down pots, spades, axes, &c., in their proper places, and overhauling the gear preparatory to marching.

Having breakfasted, the little Bushman and myself, assisted by the savages, lassoed, sorted, and yoked twenty-four oxen, placing twelve before each waggon, when we cracked our whips and started from Boötlonamy. Mollyee and Mollyeon led the teams, while Kapain and Kuruman followed behind, driving the horses and loose oxen. In former days I had acquired considerable experience in driving tandem and four-in-hand; but I had now undertaken a pursuit of a widely different character; I soon, however, became quite *au fait* in the mysteries of inspanning and outspanning, and eventually learnt to drive my own waggons with nearly the same expedition as the Hottentots.

The vley of Boötlonamy being firm and hard, we rattled along it at a good pace; but in the evening, as we cleared it, and entered the heavy sandy tracts beyond, the oxen, having discovered that their new drivers could not wield the whips with the rapidity and execution of the old, declined to move beyond the pace they fancied, often halting of their own accord. Eventually, in ascending a sandy ridge, the Bushman's waggon stuck fast in the deep sand, and in trying to drag it out, the oxen broke the "dissel-boom," or pole. Finding that the labours we had undertaken were greater than I had calculated upon, I resolved to go on the morrow in pursuit of the run-aways; and accordingly, at dawn on the following day, leaving the waggons and their valuable contents at the mercy of the savages, I started with the Bushman and a spare horse to endeavour to overtake them, but after a fruitless search of many miles we at length lost our way in the intricacies of the forest. Here we spent the night, and, owing to my having lost my matches, I was without a fire, thereby incurring great danger of losing the horses and ourselves by lions; and we had scarcely ~~quarrelled~~ when two huge rhinoceroses came up and stood

within twenty yards of us, and would not for a long time be persuaded to depart. Some time after a hyæna made his appearance, which I pelted with stones, when he took the hint and made off. The horses were completely done up, and when knee-haltered would not feed.

On the 25th, as soon as it was clear, I ascended the summit of a pyramidal little hill beside which we had slept, to ascertain if possible whither I had wandered; but the view from hence did not help to elucidate matters, endless forests stretching away on every side without a mark to assist my memory. I now resolved to seek no longer for my ruffianly Hottentots; and on the morning of the 26th, having cast loose our horses, we proceeded to consume raw meat and water, and rode for the waggons, which we reached in the afternoon. They were as I had left them, and also the savages, who had fortunately discovered a small vley of rain-water about two miles to the southward of their position, where they had daily refreshed themselves and the cattle. My situation here was by no means an enviable one: one of the waggons was fast in deep sand, with the dissel-boom broken, and the fore-axle of the other was cracked, so that if it gave way on the line of march while crossing the desert and far from water, I should have had no alternative but to abandon the vehicle to its fate. Moreover, owing to the indolent disposition of the Hottentots, everything connected with the gear was broken and out of order; the hatchets appeared to have been used in chopping gun-flints, and all their handles were in similar condition.

On the morning of the 27th, having cast loose the horses and oxen, I rummaged out my tools, and in two hours put in a new dissel-boom, which I made from the stem of a tough mimosa. This being accomplished, I yoked twelve oxen to the waggon that was sticking in the sand, and tried to make them drag it out, but the cunning animals knew that it was fast, and would not exert themselves to attempt to extricate it. After inconceivable trouble and repeatedly shifting the positions of the oxen in the span, I at length made a fortunate arrangement of the cattle, the brutes for once pulled all together, and the waggon was in motion. I then inspanned the *other team*, and on our way to the next water very fortunately

knocked over a young bull camelopard with three shots. Having obtained for the present both flesh and water, my next look-out was to consider how I was to cross the sandy desert which lay betwixt me and the kraal of Booby. It was very evident that I could not return by the route I had previously held, having already ascertained that that country was now impassable for ox-waggon, all the waters being dry.

On explaining this to my Bamangwato followers, Mollyeon stated that he had once traversed that country in a dry season, though many years before, and that he and his comrades had obtained water in some deep pits, which had been excavated by Bakalahari in a rocky part of the desert, considerably to the eastward of my former route. He said we should require the greater part of two days to reach this water, our route thither lying across a soft sandy soil, varied in many places by almost impenetrable forest; but he seemed a little doubtful as to whether we should be able to discover the place, and if we did, whether the pits might not prove dry—this was certainly a bright prospect, more especially as the next water (which he represented as a perpetual fountain) was two days beyond the pits.

On the 28th I was occupied in putting sundry things to rights, for I had thoughts of trekking on the following day, but could not divest myself of the most dismal forebodings, for I felt certain that the heavier waggon would again stick fast, or that the cracked axletree would come in contact with some tree, and leave me in the desert a hopeless wreck, remote from water or any assistance. On the 29th I waited till the sun was up, that the cattle might drink plentifully, when I immediately inspanned, and commenced my anxious journey. For the first ten or twelve miles we proceeded along a hollow, where the soil was in general tolerably firm, but on leaving this we entered upon a most impracticable country, the waggons sinking about four inches in the soft sand; to increase our difficulties our progress was presently opposed by an interminable forest, where the trees stood so close together as often to bar the possibility of the waggons passing betwixt them.

*On these occasions I was obliged to turn pioneer, and in*

the course of the day felled with the axe not less than fifty trees. In this manner I held on till the sun went down, when I halted in dense forest and cast loose the oxen for an hour; after which, with infinite trouble, I lassoed the two teams and made them fast on the trektow, in their proper places, ready to inspan at dawn of day. I had also nine horses to catch and make fast, and none to assist me but the little Bushman; for the savages were so lazy and awkward, that one Hottentot would have assisted me more than the whole pack of them.

On the 30th I inspanned before light, and held on through heavy sand and forest, where it was necessary to keep the axes in constant operation. In the afternoon we reached the promised pits, but had the mortification to find that all they contained was a little mud. The Bechuanas, however, having unlashed the spades, which were vigorously plied, the water began very reluctantly to trickle in from every side, and in two hours I obtained a very moderate supply for the oxen. My poor horses did not get a drop; and we resumed our march beneath a burning sun of unusual intensity. The sand became, if possible, worse than ever, and the waggons repeatedly stuck fast; my waggon sails were reduced to ribbons by wait-a-bit thorns, and at sunset I halted for the night, and cast loose my wretched oxen.

On the 31st at about four P.M. I got clear of the desert, and to my infinite delight reached a strong perennial fountain situated in a finely-wooded valley on the northern borders of the mountain country, extending to the southward, with little intermission, as far as a chain of the Kurrichane range. Towards the end of the march it was necessary to descend into a rugged valley, and cross a very awkward watercourse, in which the baggage-waggon was within a hair's-breadth of being capsized. Ascending from this valley, we crossed a precipitous ridge, where large disjointed masses of rock threatened the momentary destruction of the waggons. As I was yoking one of the oxen, which had broken his yokeskey and got out of his place, I received a severe kick on the cap of the knee from a vicious ox in front, which gave me intense pain and *laid me prostrate on the ground*. I however managed to drive ;



the waggon to its destination, when, after lying for a few minutes, the pain increased so much that I lay panting on my bed. A herd of zebras approached the fountain to drink before my knee stiffened, and this was a godsend, for our flesh was at an end and the dogs starving. In torture as I was, I managed to make a limping stalk towards them, and brought down a brace of fine old mares.

The following day my knee was much better, and in the afternoon I shot two koodoos and a pallah—one of the former from the saddle as he bounded past me at a hundred yards. During the night I was awoke by an unusual disturbance in the camp, and, raising my head, found the Bechuanas standing close together round the fire with their faces outwards, while they talked with unusual volubility. The dogs were barking loud and angrily, and kept rushing back occasionally to the fire, as if pursued by some animal; the night was pitch dark, so that nothing could be seen, but Mollyeon told me that a lion and a leopard were prowling round us, endeavouring to obtain the venison of the zebras, which hung in festoons in the trees beside us, and next moment I heard the voices of both, for the lion roared and the leopard shrieked wildly as they sprang after the dogs. At length their boldness increased; the lion chased the dogs with angry growls within twenty yards of where we stood, and the leopard actually sprang into the centre of my larder beside the fire, and was making off with a large fragment of ribs, when the dogs went gallantly at him, but were so terribly lacerated that two of them soon after died from their wounds. We now snatched up large flaming brands from the fire, and, meeting the lion as he advanced, sent them flying in his face, when he made off: I feared to use my rifle lest I should shoot the dogs. The horses and oxen, although much alarmed, did not endeavour to break loose, being still very much fatigued from the hardships they had undergone.

On the morning of the 2nd I shot a koodoo, which antelope seemed to be tolerably abundant here. This day my poor Old Grey was attacked with the African distemper. With considerable difficulty I brought him to camp, where I instantly bled him, but to no purpose, and in another hour the

"gallant grey" lay down and "stretched his stiff limbs to rise no more;" at night the lion feasted on his body, and when he was full the leopard and hyænas finished it.

On the morning of the 3rd I held for Booby, which I reached at midday on the 5th. I was kindly welcomed by Caachy, now the chief of Booby, the former one having been blown up in my absence as already mentioned. He informed me that my runaway Hottentots had reached his kraal, and were very much exhausted by their march; he had assisted them with corn, and passed them on to Bakatla. They informed the chief that I had dismissed them from my service, having engaged other servants at Bamangwato. I remained at Booby till midday on the 7th, and left that place accompanied by a large body of the natives, some of them leading pack-oxen which were sent by Caachy to convey the venison of sundry rhinoceroses which I engaged to shoot for him. These men led me towards Bakatla by a different route from that which I had formerly taken.

Early on the 13th I was met by a party from Bakatla kindly despatched by Dr. Livingstone, the resident missionary, when he heard of my being abandoned by my colonial servants. The party consisted of a Bechuana, named Mabal, belonging to Kuruman (who assisted Dr. Livingstone in teaching the children of the Bakatlas), and three of the Bakatla tribe. These men reached me just at the right moment; for we had scarcely proceeded three hundred yards when the damaged axletree broke short across, and the wheel rolling away the waggon came down on its side. This was a catastrophe I had for some time anticipated, and was only thankful that it had been deferred so long. We outspanned, and having unloaded the waggon, put a support under it, took out the forestell, and then set about making a false axletree of tough thorn-wood. The vertical sun was extremely powerful, and both my ankles gave me severe and never-ceasing pain from wounds inflicted by the wait-a-bit thorns and inflammation induced by the constant animal diet upon which I had so long subsisted. In the afternoon of the following day I got the false axletree fixed in its proper position.

*On the 15th we inspanned, and, having passed through the*

bold mountain gorge of Sesetabie, encamped on the margin of a periodical river whose precipitous banks and broad channel of deep soft sand caused me considerable apprehensions of difficulties for the morrow.

On the 16th I unlashed my spades and pickaxe, and worked hard for several hours cutting down the bank of the river and constructing a road for the waggons to pass; after which we inspanned and took the stream. I drove my waggon safely through; but, alas! not so with the baggage-waggon; twice it stuck fast in the treacherous sand while crossing the river's bed, but the sturdy oxen pulled it out, and had dragged it more than half-way up the almost perpendicular bank, when the native who led the long team, unmindful that a waggon was behind them, suddenly turned the leading oxen short towards the river's bank, thus rendering it impossible for the driver to steer his after oxen. The waggon was thus dragged off the fine road which I had made for it, and after quivering for a moment as if loth to meet its fate, it fell heavily over and rolled down the bank with a most terrific crash, smashing the fine capped tent, and sending the ivory and all my highly-valued trophies flying into the bed of the river in a mass of the most dire confusion.

This was enough to vex any man, but I had now become so seasoned to adversity that I only laughed at the capsized; and having unyoked the oxen, we commenced carrying the heavy ivory and other articles up the bank to the level ground beyond; after which we righted the waggon, and a team of oxen dragged it up the bank. I then set to work to repair the tent with green boughs, and before sunset we had again replaced the greater part of the cargo. As the sun went down the Cow died from the distemper.

On the 17th, having finished stowing the waggon, we held on till the evening, when the axletree which I had made burst, and the linchpin giving way the wheel rolled off, leaving me once more a wreck. At an early hour all hands were busy in again unloading the broken waggon, and before night I had finished another axletree and fixed it in its place. The day throughout was dark and gloomy—heavy clouds hung low on *the mountain* of the eagles, reminding me of the mist I was

went to see in the distant country of the Gael, and our ears were repeatedly saluted with the subdued voices of a troop of lions which were moaning in concert around its base. In the evening my handsome little bay horse Hutton died, and scarcely had night set in when his doleful coronach was wildly re-echoed by the shrill voices of a score of jackals, which brought the lions to their assistance, and presently we heard them feasting on his remains.

On the morning of the 19th we resumed our march, and at a late hour on the evening of the 20th reached the missionary station at Bakatla, where I was kindly received by Mrs. Livingstone, who had, as well as the Doctor, been anxious concerning me, and entertained great apprehensions for my safety. Her husband was at the time absent on a visit to Sichely, superintending the erection of a dwelling-house and place of public worship at that chief's kraal, named Chouaney, whither he intended shortly to remove, there being another missionary, Mr. Edwards, already stationed at Bakatla, who was then absent on a visit to the colony. Dr. Livingstone informed me on his return that there was war between the Baquainas, of whom Sichely is chief, and the Bakatlas, and that the latter were in daily expectation of an attack.

On comparing notes with my kind host, I found that I had lost a day during my sojourn in the far interior. The 23rd was Sunday, when I attended Divine service, and had considerable difficulty to maintain my gravity as sundry members of the congregation entered the church clad in the most unique apparel; some of them wore extraordinary old hats ornamented with fragments of women's clothes and ostrich feathers, and these they were very reluctant to take off—indeed one man sat with his beaver on immediately before the minister until the doorkeeper ordered him to remove it. At dinner we had a variety of excellent vegetables, the garden producing almost every sort in great perfection; the potatoes in particular were very fine. To-day another of my stud, named Yarborough (so called in honour of a gallant major of the 91st from whom I purchased him), died of the distemper, and was immediately consumed by the starving curs of the *Bakatlas*. *Being anxious to visit Sichely and his tribe, Dr. Liv-*

ingstone and I started on the 24th for Chouaney. Our road lay through the most perfect country. On clearing the romantic valley of Bakatla we descended into another beautiful valley, through which meandered the crystal waters of the Ngotwani, an interesting stream, which, flowing in a north-easterly direction, falls into the Limpopo about sixty miles below its junction with the Mariqua; the Ngotwani contains several varieties of fish, which are of good flavour, and afford the angler steady average sport both with bait and fly. After following for some distance the finely-wooded banks of this river, and having twice crossed its stream, we entered upon an extensive open tract of country adorned with a carpet of the most luxuriant herbage. This plain was beautifully wooded towards the mountain ranges which bound it on every side, and the Ngotwani twined in a serpentine course along the middle of it, forming in one part an extensive vley or marsh about four miles long and a quarter of a mile in breadth. This vley was now beautified with a dense crop of waving green reeds, averaging about fourteen feet in height, and forming a favourite resort of buffaloes and their invariable attendants the lions. Dr. Livingstone told me that a party of Baquainas were on the ensuing day to visit this vley, for the purpose of cutting a supply of reeds with which to thatch his new church and dwelling-house; and he said he should wish me, if an opportunity presented itself, to shoot some large game on which these men might feed.

Marching quietly along we suddenly beheld a numerous herd of buffaloes grazing on the open plain betwixt us and the vley; their dark imposing squadrons extended over a great space of ground, and we reckoned there might be between six or eight hundred of them. As I drew near they stood gazing at me for a minute, when the whole herd, panic-stricken, started off together, and thundering along in a compressed mass, held for the reeds. Their amazing numbers greatly impeded their progress, so I had no difficulty in keeping alongside of them, and as I galloped along I endeavoured to select the finest head, but among so many it was no easy matter to make a choice, for as soon as I selected one he disappeared among the ranks of his companions. At length I let fly right and left into

them, and next moment they gained the margin of the lofty reeds; here the whole herd suddenly halted and faced about with the regularity and precision of a regiment of cavalry, when, having overhauled me for half a minute, they charged headlong into the soft muddy vley, and in another moment were hidden from my sight. I marked the reeds bowing before them far on my right and left as they splashed and struggled through the marshy vley; presently they gained the other side, and held across the open plain, steering for their strongholds in the woods beyond. As the clouds of dust behind me cleared away, I looked back and beheld a fine old cow fall dead; near her stood a wounded calf, whose mother had remained beside it, being loth to leave her offspring.

I now returned to Dr. Livingstone, when we brought up the waggon for the fallen buffaloes, and just as we had outspanned, I, under cover of one of the oxen, bowled a blue wildebeest over with my rifle. Early on the following morning the reed-cutters from Chouaney hove in sight, and were not a little gratified to find so bountiful a supply of their favourite "niama," or flesh, awaiting their arrival. It was late when we outspanned at Chouaney, where we were immediately welcomed by a messenger from Sicheley, who expressed himself highly gratified at our arrival, and promised to come and breakfast with me next morning.

## CHAPTER XX.

ARRIVE AT SICHELY'S KRAAL — RAINMAKERS — GUN-MEDICINE —  
BAKATLA — KURUMAN — CAMPBELLSDORP — COLESBERG AND  
GRAHAMSTOWN.

At an early hour on the 26th of November, Sichely presented himself with a large retinue. The appearance of this chief was prepossessing, and his manner civil and engaging; his stature was about five feet ten inches, and in his person he inclined to corpulency. His dress consisted of a handsome leopard-skin kaross; and on his arms and legs, which were stout and well turned, he wore a profusion of brass and copper ornaments, manufactured by tribes residing a long way to the eastward. In the forenoon I accompanied Sichely to his kraal, situated in the centre of the town; alongside which stood respectively the kraals of his wives, five in number. These were neatly built, and of a circular form, the walls and floors being smoothly plastered with a composition of clay and cow-dung, and secured from the weather by a firm and well-constructed thatch of long dry grass. Each kraal was surrounded by an area enclosed with a strong impenetrable fence, six feet in height. The town was built on a gentle slope on the northern side of a broad extensive strath, throughout the whole extent of which lay wide fields and gardens enclosed with hedges of wait-a-bits.

A short time previous to my arrival a rumour having reached Sichely that he was likely to be attacked by the emigrant Boers, he suddenly resolved to surround his city with a wall of stones. It was now completed, with loopholes at intervals, through which to fire upon the advancing enemy with the muskets which he had resolved to purchase from hunters and traders like myself.

I was duly introduced to the five queens, each of whose wig-  
was I visited in succession. These ladies were of goodly  
, and comely in their appearance; they all possessed a

choice assortment of very fine karosses of various descriptions ; and their persons were adorned with a profusion of ornaments of beads and brass and copper wire. Sichely professed, and was believed by his tribe, to be a skilful rainmaker, viz., one having the power of creating rain when required for the fields and gardens ; the rainmaker's art is a regular profession among the Bechuanas, and the individuals who practise it are much esteemed and highly venerated among their fellow-men. They are supposed to work by supernatural agency ; and acting probably on the general principle, that a prophet is not without honour save in his own country, they invariably practise their arts amongst tribes remote from their own particular districts. The birth and original place of residence of these rainmakers are always involved in mystery, and they pretend to have been suddenly created in some lonely cave, or on the summit of a mountain, from which they came in a state of manhood, without understanding the usual ordeal of birth. Some of them attain to much higher reputation than their fellow-necromancers : an illustrious character of this description is much sought after, and is often sent for from an amazing distance by a chief on whose dominions the periodical thunderstorms (which are often very partial) have failed to descend.

The modes in which they propitiate the clouds are various. The one most commonly practised is, by collecting a few leaves of each variety of tree in the forest, which they allow to simmer in large pots over a slow fire, and, while a sheep is killed by pricking it in the heart with a "lemue," or long sewing-needle, the rainmaker is employed in performing a variety of absurd incantations. The steam arising from the simmering leaves is supposed to reach and propitiate the clouds, and the remainder of the day is spent in dances which are joined in by all the tribe, and kept up till midnight, being accompanied with songs having a long-continued chorus ; in this all join, the burden of it is the power and praises of the rainmaker. It often, however, happens that the relentless clouds decline attending to the solicitations of the rainmaker, and the fields of young corn become parched and withered. Other schemes are then resorted to. A number of the young men sally forth, and, forming an extensive circle,



enclose the surface of some mountain-side in which the rock-loving klipspringer is likely to be met with, when, by gradually contracting their circle, like our Highlanders of old, they generally manage to catch alive sundry klipspringers, whose voices are supposed to attract rain. The unfortunate little antelopes thus captured are paraded round the kraal, while the rainmaker, by pinching them, induces them to scream; but as it often happens that these and all his other machinations prove unavailing, the rainmaker is at times obliged eventually to make a moonlight flitting, and cut and run for it, when the services of another of the fraternity are engaged.

When these sorcerers fail to fulfil their promises they always ascribe their want of success to the presence of some mysterious agency which has destroyed the effect of their otherwise infallible nostrums; ivory is believed to have great influence in driving away rain, in consequence of which they produce it only as the sun goes down, in the summer season, at which time it is brought for the trader's inspection, carefully wrapped up in a kaross. I remember on one occasion incurring the censure of a whole tribe, who firmly believed me to have frightened the rain from their dominions by exposing a quantity of ivory at noonday; and on another the chief of another commanded a missionary to remove all the rafters from the roof of his house, these having been pointed out by the rainmaker as obstructing the success of his incantations.

The Griquas, taking advantage of the superstitions of the Bechuanas, often practise on their credulity, and, a short time before I visited Sichely, a party of the former who were hunting in his territory obtained several valuable karosses from him, in barter for a little sulphur, which they represented as a most effectual medicine for guns, and assured Sichely that, by rubbing a small quantity on their hands before proceeding to the field, they would assuredly obtain the animal they wanted.

One day when in conversation with the chief the subject turned on ball-practice, and the king, probably relying on the power of his medicine, offered to stake a couple of valuable karosses against a large measure filled with my gunpowder, *but stipulated* that his three brothers should assist in the

match. While Sichely was loading his gun I repaired to the fore-chest of the waggon, and observing that I was watched by several of the natives, I proceeded to rub my hands with sulphur; this was instantly reported to the chief, who directly joined me, and, clapping me on the back, entreated that I would give him a little of my medicine for his gun. Our target being set up, we commenced firing: it was a small piece of wood, six inches long by four in breadth, and was placed on the stump of a tree, at the distance of one hundred paces. Sichely fired the first shot, and very naturally missed it, upon which I let fly and split it through the middle; it was then set up again, when Sichely and his brothers continued firing, without once touching it, till night put an end to their proceedings. This, of course, was solely attributed by all present to the power of the medicine I had used.

When Dr. Livingstone was informed of the circumstance he was very much shocked, declaring that in future the natives would fail to believe him when he denounced supernatural agency, having now seen it practised by his own countryman. I obtained several very fine karosses, ivory, ostrich feathers, and sundry interesting curiosities, in barter from Sichely and his tribe; and at noon, on the 27th, we started for Bakatla. In the evening of the following day the "Immense Brute" died of the distemper, and next morning the chestnut pony.

On the afternoon of the 29th we outspanned at Bakatla. A party of Baralong were then on a visit to Moselely on a trading excursion for skins. The head-quarters of these men was situated to the westward of Motito, on the borders of the great Kalahari desert. Night set in with a terrific thunderstorm; the kraal occupied by the six strangers was struck by the electric fluid, one of them being killed on the spot, and the other five were more or less affected by the shock. Dr. Livingstone informed me that this event would entail great alarm and uneasiness upon Moselely, since all the tribes would blame him for the accident, and the natives on the following day were engaged in the most absurd idolatrous rites to cleanse the kraal and the survivors from the effects of the electricity. During my stay at Bakatla I traded extensively with the natives, and obtained a number of karosses and various articles of iron

terest. It was the heat of summer, and the sun at noon was extremely overpowering; the atmosphere, however, was occasionally refreshed by thunderstorms, accompanied with grateful showers of rain, which circumstance was, of course, attributed to the power of the rainmaker, and the vale rang nightly with loud and joyous songs, re-echoing his praises in a prolonged chorus. Before leaving Bakatla, Sunday died, which reduced my stud from ten to two; and, before dismissing this subject, I may mention that I managed to save these two from the distemper by preventing them from eating grass and keeping them covered at night with blankets.

On the 11th I took leave of my kind host Dr. Livingstone, and, after a march of many days, on the 2nd of January reached Kuruman, where I was entertained by Mr. Moffat with his usual kindness and hospitality. The following day was Sunday, when I attended Divine service in the large church morning and evening, and saw sixteen men and women who had embraced the Christian faith baptised. It was now the fruit-season, and the trees in the gardens of the missionaries were groaning under the most delicious peaches, figs, and apples; the vines bore goodly clusters of grapes, but these had not yet ripened. I left one of the waggons with its contents here; also the whole of my oxen, with the exception of one span, with which, on the evening of the 7th, I set out for Koning, and reached it at an early hour in the following morning.

Leaving Koning on the afternoon of the 8th, I resumed my march for Daniel's-kuil. Between Koning and Daniel's-kuil occur two interesting caves, long famous as affording a residence and protection to hordes of marauding Bushmen, and from which not very long since they lifted fat cattle from the sleek herds of their more industrious neighbours the Griquas and Bechuanas. But they had their reward; for on one occasion fire was made use of to smoke out the Bushmen, when those who escaped death by suffocation fell by the battle-axes and assagais of their foes without.

When driven to extremity the Bushmen are extremely plucky, and show fight to the last. In the year 1847, a Bechuana chief, named Assyabona, despatched a strong party of tribe against a large horde of wild Bushmen, whose rob-

beries had become so daring and extensive that they were the terror of all who dwelt a hundred miles around them ; on this occasion a great number were destroyed, having been overtaken in open ground. One determined fellow hastily collected several quivers of the poisoned arrows of his dying comrades, and ensconced himself within three large stones, from which position he for a long time defied the whole hostile array of Bechuanas, shooting two of them dead on the spot, and wounding a number of others. Though gallantly defending himself, he seemed aware that he could not possibly escape ; and while peppering the Bechuanas and upbraiding them with cowardice, he was eventually finished with a shot in the forehead by a son of Mahura's, chief of the Batlapis, as he was in the act of discharging one of his diminutive yet deadly shafts.

On the 10th I marched from Daniel's-kuil, and early on the 12th encamped at Campbellsdorp, where I found Mr. Bartlett and Captain Cornelius Kok in great force. Here I overtook my runaway Hottentots, and, commiserating their condition, presented them with the amount of their wages during the time they had remained with me.

At a late hour on the 13th I outspanned on the fragrant banks of the lovely Vaal river by clear moonlight, and on the morrow, the water being fortunately low, crossed it with little difficulty. On the 20th I took the drift of the Great Orange River, but with very faint hopes that my worn-out oxen would succeed in dragging me through its treacherous sands, more especially since two Boers who had crossed an hour previous had deemed it necessary to inspan sixteen well-conditioned beasts to their light waggons. I was right in my conjecture ; for with infinite flogging and shouting I got the waggon only half-way through, when it stuck fast, and nothing could prevail upon the oxen to move it a yard farther. A Griqua offered to lend me on hire a fresh span of able-bodied cattle, and, with the help of these and some of my best, I got safely through, and once more encamped within her Majesty's dominions. Resuming my march for Colesberg, I trekked on till near midnight ; the country was parched and arid, without a blade of grass for the weary oxen.

*On the 21st I left the Bushman to bring on the waggon, and*

walked ahead under a most terrific sun to the farm where I had formerly purchased Prince and Bonteberg. My costume consisted of a dilapidated wide-awake hat, which had run the gauntlet with many a grove of wait-a-bits, a dusty-looking ragged shirt, and a pair of still more ragged-looking canvas trowsers, or rather breeches, for they had been cut off above the knee, while my face was adorned with a shaggy red beard, the *tout ensemble* being that of one escaped from Bedlam. The inmates of the house took fright at my wild appearance, and two of the Boers, timidly projecting their heads from the half-closed door, loudly shouted to me to lay down my gun; one of them was the owner of the farm, and the man from whom I had bought the dogs, yet he nevertheless failed to recognise me; and commiserating the transparent texture of my continuations, offered to lend me a pair of leather "crackers." Declining the proffered apparel, I entered the house without ceremony, when the children immediately recognised me as "de carle wha heb vor Bonteberg ha-quoch," viz. the man that bought Bonteberg.

On the 26th I entered the village of Colesberg, where I found that my old friends, the 91st, had been replaced by a detachment of the 45th. My first visit was to the post-office, but much to my disappointment I found no letters. Having off-loaded my waggon, I handed it over to the resident blacksmith, to undergo repairs, of which it stood much in need. My Bechuana followers were extremely struck with the size and appearance of Colesberg, and the movements of the military elicited their unfeigned delight and approbation.

On the 1st of February, having re-engaged Mr. Kleinboy, I left Colesberg, and reached Grahamstown on the 22nd, when I took up my residence with Captain Hogg of the 7th Dragoon Guards. The officers of this regiment had brought out a pack of fox-hounds, which, while they lasted, afforded excellent sport, but unfortunately the climate of Southern Africa, especially near the coast, is so very unfavourable for well-bred English dogs, that, although no trouble nor expense was spared in the management of these hounds, fresh drafts were constantly exported from England, and litters of pups carefully reared in the colony, the pack nevertheless had considerably diminished.

## CHAPTER XXI.

SET OUT AGAIN FOR THE FAR INTERIOR — FORT BEAUFORT — HUNT ELEPHANTS — RHINOCEROS AND LION SHOT — LEAVE BAMANGWATO COUNTRY.

I CONTINUED in Grahamstown till the 7th of March, when I set out once more for the distant forests of the far interior. Before leaving I engaged a discharged soldier of the 91st, named George Martin, in the capacity of head servant. This man, who hailed from Haddington, bore an excellent character on leaving the regiment; he was accustomed to the charge of horses, in which he took a great interest. My most important purchases in the sporting department consisted of a double-barrelled rifle, with spare shot-barrels, by Westley Richards, and two right good steeds, one a very superior coal-black gelding, which I purchased of Captain Walpole of the Engineers for 20*l.*, a sum considerably below its value. I named this horse Black Jack; in paces and disposition he very much resembled my lamented Colesberg, and was altogether one of the finest animals I ever mounted. The other horse was a grey; and as it is probable that he may in future pages be mentioned under the designation of the 'Old Grey,' I trust the reader will not confound him with the original 'Old Grey.'

On the morning of the 9th I reached Fort Beaufort, and on the 15th resumed my march for the interior, having purchased four excellent horses from the officers of the garrison: one of these was a jet-black steed, named Schwartland. He was one of the finest shooting-horses in Southern Africa, and understood his work so well that he would suddenly halt in full career when I wished to fire, if I merely placed my hand upon his neck. At the farm of Messrs. Nelson and Blane I added two more horses to my stud, which I called Brown Jock and Mazeppa, and also purchased a span of oxen and some milch cows.

*At Colesberg, where I remained from the 2nd until the 9th;*

I engaged two Hottentot servants named Booi and Kleinfeldt (the latter individual being one of those who had forsaken my banner at Boötlonamy), and purchased two more valuable steeds, which increased my stud to ten very superior young horses. I also bought a number of rough long-legged serviceable dogs of a variety of breeds, which, with several other ragged-looking tykes, purchased from Boers along the line of march, increased my kennel to about twenty business-like dogs. We marched out of the village and held on until we reached the Orange River at Boata's Drift, where we outspanned beneath the shade of a grove of willows. Having forded the river on horseback, it proved too deep to take the waggons over, but I had the consolation to remark that the waters were on the ebb, and by the forenoon of the following day they had so far subsided as to enable me to cross without wetting my cargo.

I now pushed on with all speed for my Fountain of Elephants at Massouey; and on the 15th, just as I had reached the Bastard kraal of Rhama, fell in with my old servant Carolus, who had absconded from me at Boötlonamy; he had met with his old companions Kleinfeldt and Kleinboy, and resolved to turn about and re-enter my service, which I was not sorry for, as I was short of hands for the distant expedition I was about to make. I also fell in with Captain Arkwright and Mr. Christie, who were proceeding up the country on a similar expedition to my own.

On the 16th of May I halted at Chouaney, and on the 20th fell in with a troop of nine bull elephants, the finest of which I shot. After this we pressed on as rapidly as possible for my favourite fountain Massouey, and reached it on the 29th.

I felt sincere pleasure in revisiting this interesting spot, and found it well frequented by the elephants, two troops of cows and three old bulls having drank there on the preceding night. On the waggons coming up I took a hasty breakfast, and started on the spoor of a troop of cows—in all about ten, but there were only three full grown ones, and each of these unluckily went off in different directions. I rode within twenty yards of the best, and halting, put two balls close behind her ~~elder~~, calling to Martin to finish her. I then galloped

after the second best, and in three minutes had turned her head towards camp, and presently rolled her over with about six shots. Martin and the Bushman not appearing when two hours had elapsed, I rode to camp, where, to my astonishment, I found my servant had actually lost my elephant through the most inexcusable want of pluck. I was very much annoyed, and regretted having attacked the troop at all.

On the following day Mollyeon and I walked to the fountain, round which was the spoor of elephants, besides an unusual number of rhinoceroses, perhaps twenty. I made a hasty breakfast, and then took up the spoor of the two best bulls, with one after-rider; we followed them about six miles in vain, but soon came upon three other bull elephants, about three parts grown, feeding slowly along, steering north, one of which, after a short and dangerous conflict, I slew with five bullets.

We then took up the spoor of one of our first elephants, and after following it for about five miles through very open country, reached some dense wait-a-bit cover, where we found our friend hiding himself within twenty yards of us. He took away at once through the thickest of the cover, and on my approaching for a shot, made a most terrific charge, sending large thorny trees flying like grass before him. I sent a ball through his ribs after this charge, when he made clean away, and got into better country; here I fought with him for about an hour, and gave him sixteen shots from the saddle; but he turned and regained the dense thorny cover, and in this I lost him.

On the morning of June 1st, accompanied by Kleinfeldt as after-rider on Dreadnought, being myself mounted on Schwarmland, my best shooting-horse, I started on the spoor of a large herd which had been at the fountain the night before. Many a weary mile was galloped over before the glorious squadron hove in sight.

It consisted of ten bull elephants, eight of them about three parts grown, and the other two enormous old elephants, in magnificent condition. We halted and gave the dogs water, and I then rode slowly round the troop to ascertain which was the best. After passing twice along their front, they all, as if by



one accord, turned their faces to me, and advanced leisurely within forty yards, giving me an excellent opportunity of making my choice; at length they saw me, and, sounding the alarm, made off together in great consternation. Galloping alongside to make my final choice, I selected the largest elephant, and had no little difficulty in getting him clear of his comrades, some of which were extremely fierce, and were trumpeting along, with their tails and trunks aloft. All my dogs had gone off to the right and left after other elephants, and Dreadnought came up to me, having thrown my after-rider, who did not succeed in recapturing him.

My elephant now, hearing the barking and trumpeting on every side, halted beside a bushy tree, with his head high, and right to me; but presently turning his broadside, I gave it him sharp right and left behind the shoulder; and the dogs, hearing the shots, came up to my assistance. The conflict now became fast and furious, and I had very pleasant work with this fine old elephant; his fury and attention were chiefly directed towards the dogs, who stuck well to him; but he was by far the toughest elephant to finish that I had ever engaged with. I gave him thirty-five balls, all about and behind his shoulder, and at distances varying from fifteen to thirty-five yards, before he died.

No elephants having drunk at the fount for some days, I resolved, on the 5th, to leave my favourite Massouey, and accordingly marched about one P.M. At Corriebely there was water enough for the horses; and here I met Mutchuisho with a large party of Bechuanas, sent by Sicomy to endeavour to make me come and trade with him. I halted for an hour after sunset, and trekked on till the moon went down, when I halted near my old outspanning-place, having performed a very long and difficult march.

On the 6th we reached Lesausau and its fountain, beside which I shot that night two old black rhinoceroses, bull and cow, with my smooth bore carrying six to the pound. Along with the cow *borélé* were two other old bulls, who fought together for three hours alongside of me.

On the 7th Sicomy, whom I had seen the previous day, made his appearance early, and towards evening brought

powder and lead with seven elephants' teeth; soon after the bargain was concluded he ordered his men to take away the teeth, and threw me back the powder; but on my kicking it back, and swearing I would shoot the first man who touched the ivory, he relinquished the idea.

On the 8th Sicomy prowled about the waggons all day, and Arkwright and Christie rode up to my waggons. They had lost one ox and two horses in pitfalls on the march; and their "butler," while running to the assistance of the steeds, had been himself engulfed in another hole, which fortunately, however, lacked the usual sharp-pointed stake for impaling the game.

On the 9th Sicomy brought me ivory, and asked me to go to my hunting-ground, saying that he would trade with me there: it was evident he was very anxious to separate the two parties. As soon as possible, therefore, I inspanned, and trekked down the broad strath, steering south, although the natives asserted that I should find no water, and tried to guide me north; after going about eight miles I discovered, much to the annoyance of the Bamangwatos, the residence of the Bakaas, where I halted for the night, having sent a message to Schooey, the old chief, that I would trade with him. Accordingly he, with his wives and nobility, appeared at an early hour next day, and before twelve o'clock I had purchased several tusks of elephants; also two very fine karosses of leopard-skin, &c. I then inspanned, and in two hours got clear of the Bamangwato mountains, after which I held about east, through thick forest, halting for the night beside a small fount, where the horses could not drink. On the march pallah were abundant and very tame.

On the morning of the 12th Sicomy came to trade with me, and in about three hours I had purchased ten bull and ten cow elephants' teeth for ten muskets, and seven other cow elephants' teeth for powder, lead, and flints; I bought also two kobaoba knobkerries. Elephants were reported to have drunk within a mile during the night. This caused an immense bustle; and, accompanied by a hundred and fifty starving natives, we followed the spoor till night. The country was in flames far and wide, but we crossed the fire, and took

the spoor beyond. A troop of eight fat male elands and a troop of giraffes were seen this day.

The spoor was followed for several miles in an easterly course next day, sometimes through most horrible wait-a-bit thorns. About midday we came up with one mighty old bull, and two bulls three parts grown. I first shot the best of the two small bulls, and then the old one. The natives and all my dogs had kept him in view, and one fellow had pricked him in the stern with an assagai. The Bechuanas, upon the strength of this, came up and claimed him as theirs when he fell; but on my threatening to leave their country, they relinquished the idea.

On the 16th and 17th I bagged two first-rate bull elephants in the level forests to the eastward of Mangmaluky.

On the 18th, after breakfast, I rode to Mangmaluky to water my horses. At night a panther came within ten yards of my fire, and killed Cradock and disabled Wolf, my two best elephant-dogs.

On the 21st I held south, down a beautiful wide valley full of trees of various kinds; this was evidently a favourite haunt with the elephants, for every tree bore their marks. The fountain at the southern end of this valley was one of the most interesting I had yet seen; the water came gushing down through the wildest chasms, formed of one succession of huge masses of rock of all shapes and sizes, thrown loosely together in some places, and in others piled high one above another, as if by the hand of a giant. All the ground about the water was covered with a layer of elephants' dung about a foot deep. We had proceeded about half way up the valley when we heard a very fine troop of cows trumpeting ahead of us; and one of them was larger, I think, than any I had ever before seen. On this occasion I was extremely unfortunate. The natives drove them out on the wrong side of the cover without warning me, and, to my extreme vexation, this fine troop got away without my killing one.

On the 29th of June I reached a water called Lotlokane, and hunted in the neighbourhood for several days, bagging some very fine elephants.

*On the 13th of July I held west with Mollyeon and about*

twenty natives on the spoor of bull elephants two days old; but night setting in, we halted beneath a shady tree, and supped off an eland which I slew.

The spoor next morning led us due west along the borders of the desert without a check until sundown. We had now spooresed these elephants a very great distance, and the horses had been without water since the morning of the preceding day. I felt compassion for the thirsty steeds, and was on the point of turning, when lo! a string of Bakalahari women were seen half a mile before us, each bearing on her head an immense earthen vase and wooden bowl containing water; they had been to a great distance to draw water at a small fountain, and were now returning to their distant desert home. This was to us a perfect godsend. The horses and dogs got as much as they could drink, and all our vessels were replenished.

At sunrise we resumed the spoor, and after following it for about ten miles, finding that the elephants had gone clean away into the desert beyond the reach of man, we gave it up, and made for the fountain where the women had drawn the water on the preceding day. Here the spoor of four bull elephants, being in a soft sandy soil, was beautifully visible; they had fed slowly away from the fountain, and we followed with high hopes of seeing them that day.

At length we got into a more densely wooded country, and presently observed the elephants standing in the forest about one hundred yards off; two of them were only three parts grown, but the other two were very large, and one of them was a great deal taller and stouter than the other. This immense elephant, the largest I had seen, had unfortunately both his tusks broken short off close to the lip; I therefore hunted his comrade, who carried a very beautiful and perfect pair. At the sixth shot he came to a stand and presently fell. I then dismounted and ran up to him, when he rose to his feet, walked a few paces, fell again and died. This elephant carried the finest teeth I had yet obtained; they must have weighed one hundred pounds each. He was an extremely old bull, and had been much wounded with assagais, the blades of two of which were found in his back.

*On the 17th I made for camp, and held through a fine eye*

country lying north-west from Corriebely. In following some ostriches I came upon an extremely old and well-known black rhinoceros lying fast asleep in some low wait-a-bits, the birds having tried in vain to waken him. I fired from the saddle: the first ball hit him in the shoulder; the second near his heart, as he gained his feet. In an instant the dogs were round him, so he set off down hill at a steady canter, and led me a chase of a mile, when, his shoulder failing him, he came to a stand. At this instant I beheld a troop of about twenty fine elands trotting before me on the open slope; I therefore quickly finished the black rhinoceros with two more balls, and gave them chase, eventually bagging the two best in the troop, a bull and cow, the latter about the fattest I have ever seen.

At dawn next day I shot, from the spot I had slept on, a springbok, running, through the heart, at one hundred yards. After cutting off the horns of the black rhinoceros, I held on for Letlochee, and slept at Lebotane, a very strong and perpetual fountain.

On the 19th, at sunrise, I continued my march, and on gaining the ridge of the vast basin in which Letlochee lies, shot a buck koodoo and a bull camelopard, which I bowled over with one shot. On the 24th I left Letlochee, and held for Lotlokane.

On the march one of my Hottentots reported that he had come upon a buffalo newly killed by a lion, and that the monarch of the forest was lying in the bushes close by, watching his prey. Having saddled up three horses, I rode for the lion, accompanied by Booi and Kleinboy carrying my Moore and Westley Richards, and all my dogs. As we approached the carcase of the buffalo, which lay in a wait-a-bit thorn cover, the dogs dashing away to my left, in an instant gave tongue, and this was immediately followed by the deep and continued growling of the lion, which seemed to be advancing right to where we stood. I turned my head to ask Kleinboy for my shooting-horse; but my trusty after-riders had fled on hearing the first roar. Booi, who was swept out of the saddle by the bough of a tree, fell heavily to the ground with my pet rifle; while Kleinboy, with my other gun, was charging panic-stricken in another direction. After a short gallop I came up

with Kleinboy, who did not lack my blessing; and having changed horses and got my gun from him, I rode forward to meet my grim adversary.

Ye gods! what a savage he looked! The whole of his mane was deeply tinged with the blood of the buffalo, and the rays of the declining sun added to it a lustre which imparted to the exasperated animal a look of surpassing fierceness. He was making for the adjacent mountains, and marched in front of the dogs with his tail stuck straight out, stepping with an air of the most consummate pride and independence. There was not a moment to lose, so I rode within thirty yards of him, and, halting my horse, fired for his heart from the saddle. On receiving the ball he wheeled about, when I gave him the second a little below the first; after which he walked or ran about ten yards forward and fell dead. This was a very large old lion; he had cleaned his buffalo very nicely, dragging up all the offal into a heap at a distance from the carcase, and had watched it all day to keep away the vultures, &c.

On the 26th, feeling in very indifferent health, I remained at home, and stretched the lion's skin.

The next day, after breakfast, I rode up the wild glen, intending to seek for bastard gemsbok on the other side of the mountains, and had gone only half-way, when lo! the long-wished-for lovely sable antelope, a princely old buck, stood about two hundred yards ahead looking at me. Having heard that dogs can easily catch this antelope, and mine being at my heels, I sent them ahead, and fired a shot to encourage them; in half a minute they were at the potaquinine, and turned him down hill. He crossed the glen before me, and dashed up a very rough and rocky pass in the rocks to my right, the dogs following, but considerably thrown out. I listened to hear a bay, but listened in vain; to follow on horseback was impossible: I therefore galloped round to an opposite point, and listened with breathless anxiety, standing in my stirrups to catch one sharp note from my trusty dogs. Nor did I wait long; for in a distant hollow in the rocks I could faintly hear them at bay.

My heart beat high; it must be the sable antelope, and the dogs would never leave him; already I felt that he was mine,

and joyously urged Mazeppa over the most fearful masses of adamantine rock, and at last came to the spot where my dogs were. Some thick bushes concealed the game from my view; I peeped over these, and, to my intense disappointment, instead of the sable antelope, beheld an old bull koodoo fighting gallantly for his life; I bowled him over with a shot in the heart. Returning, I detected another sable antelope, and, having secured the steeds, I stripped to my shirt, and ascended the bold face to stalk him.

I held for a little to leeward of where I had marked him, the Bushman following with Boxer on a string, and at length beheld him through the trees within a hundred yards of me. Creeping about ten yards nearer, I lay till he should move, which he shortly did, and walking obligingly forward, stood broadside in all his glory, with his magnificent scimitar-shaped horns sweeping back over his haunches. I fired. The ball broke his fore-leg in the shoulder, and he dropped on his face, but, recovering himself, he gained his legs, and limped slowly over the ridge. Boxer immediately appeared, and, on seeing him, he turned about, when I sent my second ball through his ribs. He then disappeared, with Boxer at his heels. I followed as fast as could be, and found him half-way down the mountain, sitting on his haunches at bay, where I finished him with a shot in the heart. This was a magnificent sable antelope in the prime of life; he was very fat, and the flesh excellent.

On the 28th I went over a deal of rough ground on foot, and in the evening took some bedding up the glen, and slept there.

I had lain in great pain all night, and in the morning found myself attacked with acute rheumatic fever. I had just strength enough to gain my waggons, when the disease came on in full force, swelling up the joints of my body and giving me the most excruciating torture; I could not move hand or foot. I had no medicine except salts, which I took, and bled myself, and in about eight days the intense pains left me, but I was so weak that I could not stand.

On the morning of the 4th of August I determined to leave the Bamangwato country and to return to Sichely by way of Massouey, which place I reached on the 15th. It was, how-

ever, full of natives, and all the game gone; I accordingly trekked for Lepeby. Here, too, the natives had gathered, so I proceeded to Soobie, where I found the skull of a very large lion, which the natives said had been killed by another lion.

At night I lay by the water with Kleinboy; abundance of game came and drank, but it was too dark to shoot with any certainty. About midnight a lion and a lioness came within ten yards of us before we noticed them. I was lying half asleep, but Kleinboy took the large rifle from my side and made a lucky shot, for the ball passed through the lion's heart, when he bounded forward about fifty yards, and, groaning fearfully, expired; presently we heard the hyænas and jackals feasting on him, and before morn he was consumed. After some time the lioness came to seek her mate, and drew nearer and nearer to us, roaring most fearfully; it was truly enough to make the stoutest heart quail. Kleinboy's quite failed him; and presently, hearing other lions approaching on the opposite side of the fount, I felt that we were in danger, and accordingly agreed to light a fire, which was soon blazing cheerfully. From this deadly lair I continued to watch the water both by day and night till the 1st of September, enjoying extraordinary sport, and securing uncommonly fine specimens of the heads of all the varieties of game frequenting the district.

On that day, about twelve o'clock, Mollyee told me that my cattle-herd had come upon four wildebeests killed by a troop of lions; I immediately sent for the steeds and rode to the spot, with Martin and the Bushman as after-riders, and accompanied by all my dogs. On reaching the ground they immediately took up the scent, beating up wind; I rode after, hunting them on, and presently missed Boxer and Alert. Riding hard in that line, I found Lassie barking at a large bush, in which the lions had taken shelter, but were gone; here Argyll took up the scent, and after holding this spoor for a few hundred yards the dogs led me to the game I sought—it was a noble lioness. As I approached I beheld her great round face and black-tipped ears peeping over the low bushes, and on riding up she obstinately kept her full front to me, although the dogs were barking close around her: at length I got a raking side shot, the ball *smashed her shoulder*, and she then charged among the dogs,



without doing any harm. My second shot passed through the middle of her foot from side to side. I then beckoned to Martin for my Moore, and, riding up to within a few yards of the lioness, gave her a third shot, which crippled her in her other shoulder. She then fell powerless on the ground, when I fired my fourth shot for her heart; on receiving which she rolled over on her side and died. I cut off her head and the ten nails of her two fore feet, and rode to camp, where I found that the rascally Hottentots, taking advantage of Martin's absence, had boned all my rich game-broth, replacing it with cold water. Lions roared round the camp all night.

## CHAPTER XXII.

A LION SHOT FROM MY WATCHING-HOLE AT MIDNIGHT — MY FIFTIETH  
ELEPHANT BAGGED — ROCK-SNAKE — FIVE RHINOCEROSSES SHOT—  
MEET A GRIM LION — COLESBERG — GRAHAMSTOWN.

ON the afternoon of the 3rd of September I again watched the fountain, and towards sunset sent a ball through the heart of the best headed pallah. This I ordered to be placed in front of my hole beside the water, to attract the lions, and after supper returned to the water with Kleinboy and Mollyee. It was bright moonlight, and we had scarcely lain down when the terrible voice of a lion was heard a little to the east. The jackals were also heard feasting and snorting over the remains of a white rhinoceros I had shot. Presently a herd of zebras, accompanied by elands, approached the water, but were too timid to come in and drink: a troop of wild dogs followed, and were walking off with the pallah, when I fired into them. This they attempted to do a second time, when I fired again and wounded one of them.

Soon after a heavy clattering of hoofs was heard coming up the vley, and on came an immense herd of blue wildebeest. They were very thirsty, and the leading cow came boldly up and drank in front of me. I sent a ball through her, when she ran sixty yards up the slope behind me and fell dead. Her comrades thundered across the vley and took up a position on the opposite rising ground, leaving the carcass of their companion to the hyenas and jackals: soon after a lion gave a most appalling roar on the bushy height close opposite to us, which was succeeded by a deathlike stillness that lasted for nearly a minute. I had then only one shot in my four barrels, and, hastily loading, kept with breathless attention the strictest watch in front, expecting every moment to see the terrible king of beasts approaching; but he was too cunning. He saw all the other game fight shy of the water, so made a

circuit to leeward to get the wind off the fountain. Soon after he roared I heard a number of jackals bothering him, as if telling him to come across the vley to the wildebeest: he growled from side to side as if in reply, and then all was still.

I had listened with intense anxiety for about fifteen minutes, when I heard the hyænas and jackals give way on either side behind me from the carcase of the wildebeest, and, turning my head round, beheld a huge and majestic lion, with a black mane which nearly swept the ground, standing over the carcase. He seemed aware of my proximity, and, lowering his head, at once seized the wildebeest and dragged it some distance up the hill. He then halted to take breath, but did not expose his broadside, and in a quarter of a minute again laid hold of the wildebeest and dragged it about twelve yards farther, when he once more raised his noble head.

I had not an instant to lose; he stood with his right side exposed to me in a very slanting position, and, taking him rather low, I fired: the ball took effect, and the lion sank to the shot. All was still as death for many seconds, when he uttered a deep growl, and slowly gaining his feet, limped toward the cover, where he halted, roaring mournfully, as if dying. I had now every reason to believe that he was either dead or would die immediately, and if I did not look for him till the morning, I knew very well the hyænas and jackals would feast upon his carcase. I accordingly went up to camp, and, having saddled two horses, went with Martin to seek him, taking all the dogs, led in strings by the natives. On reaching the body of the wildebeest, the dogs were slipped and went off after the hyænas and jackals: we listened in vain for the deep growl of the lion, but I was persuaded he was dead, and rode forward to the spot where I had last heard him roar, when I had the immense satisfaction of beholding the magnificent old lion stretched out before me.

The ball had entered his belly a little in front of his flank, and traversed the length and breadth of the body, crippling him in the opposite shoulder. No description could give a correct idea of the surpassing beauty of this most majestic animal, as he lay still warm before me: I lighted a fire and gazed with delight upon his lovely black mane, his massive arms, his



STOPPING A POACHER



.

.

sharp yellow nails, his hard and terrible head, his immense and powerful teeth, his perfect beauty and symmetry throughout; and I felt that I had won the noblest prize that this wide world could yield to a sportsman. Having sent for rheims and the lechteruit, we bore the lion to camp. On my way from the water I shot with a single ball an extremely old black bull rhinoceros.

On the afternoon of the 4th I deepened my hole and bagged three black rhinoceroses, and the best pallah in a troop which came to drink.

By the following evening we had cleared away the greater part of two of the rhinoceroses which lay right in the way of the game approaching the water; I, however, obliged their leaving the third rhinoceros almost opposite to my hiding-place, in the hope of attracting a lion, and soon after the twilight had died away, went down with Kleinboy and two natives, who lay concealed in another hole, with Wolf and Boxer ready to slip, in the event of our wounding a lion.

On reaching the fountain I looked towards the carcase of the rhinoceros, and, to my astonishment, beheld the ground near it alive with large animals, which Kleinboy remarked were zebras. I answered, "Yes;" but I knew that zebras would not be capering round the carcase of a rhinoceros, so I quickly arranged my blankets, pillow, and guns in the hole, and then lay down to feast my eyes on the interesting sight before me. It was bright moonlight, as clear as I need wish, and I could see six large lions; about twelve or fifteen hyænas, and from twenty to thirty jackals, feasting on and surrounding the carcase and remains of the two rhinoceroses. The lions feasted peacefully, but the hyænas and jackals fought over every mouthful, chasing one another round and round, growling, laughing, screeching, chattering, and howling without intermission. The hyænas did not seem afraid of the lions, although they always gave way before them; for I observed that they followed them in the most disrespectful manner, and stood laughing, one or two on either side, when any lions came after their comrades to examine pieces of skin or bones which they were dragging away. I lay watching this banquet for about *three hours, in the strong hope that, when the lions had eaten*

enough, they would come and drink. During this time two black and two white rhinoceroses made their appearance, but, scared by the smell of blood, retired.

At length the lions, apparently satisfied, walked about with their heads up, and seemed to be thinking of the water, and in two minutes one of them, turning his face towards me, came forward; he was immediately followed by a second lion, and in half a minute by the remaining four. It was a decided and general move, and evident that they were all coming to drink, within fifteen yards of me.

I charged the pale and panting Kleinboy to convert himself into a stone, and knowing, from old spoor, exactly where they would drink, I cocked my left barrel and placed myself and gun in position. The six lions came steadily on along the stony ridge, until within sixty yards of me, when they halted for a minute to reconnoitre; and one of them stretched out his massive arms on the rock and lay down. Again they came forward, walking, as I had anticipated, to the old drinking-place, and three of them put down their heads and were lapping the water loudly, when Kleinboy put up his ugly sconce; I turned mine slowly to rebuke him, and again looking at the lions, found myself discovered.

An old lioness, who seemed to be the leader, had detected me, and, with her head high and her eyes fixed full upon me, was coming slowly round the corner of the little vley to cultivate my acquaintance! This unfortunate proceeding put a stop at once to all further contemplation: I thought, in my haste, it was perhaps most prudent to shoot her, especially as none of the others had noticed me. I accordingly covered her; which she saw me do and halted, exposing a full broadside. I fired; the ball entered one shoulder and passed out behind the other. She bounded forward with repeated growls, and was followed by her five comrades all enveloped in a cloud of dust; nor did they stop until they had reached the cover behind me, except one old gentleman, who looked back for a few seconds. I listened anxiously for some sound to denote the approaching end of the lioness; nor listened in vain. We soon heard her growling and stationary, as if dying. I then ~~heard~~ <sup>heard</sup> Wolf and Boxer, and, following them into the cover,



NOCTURNAL ADVENTURE WITH SIX LIONS.





found her lying dead within twenty yards of where the old lion had fallen two nights before. She was an old lioness, with perfect teeth.

On the night of the 8th, as we watched the water, Kleinboy fired without orders at a black rhinoceros; the ball entered the shoulder with a fine direction, when Borélé charged madly and furiously, through trees and bushes, right towards camp, making the most tremendous blowing noise, and, halting close to the waggons, where he staggered about for a minute or two, and fell. On coming up, I found him a magnificent specimen, carrying three distinct horns.

On the 10th we marched to Boötlonamy, and reached it at sunset. After this we moved on for three days, during which the cattle and horses nearly died of thirst, and reached Moselakose, a retired fountain in a bold glen, or gorge, in the first mountain chain before us. I found the spoor of game at the fountain here abundant, and having outspanned at a considerable distance from it, at once set about making a hole.

On the 16th I rode to the water, and at one period during this day there were standing within shot of me as many as three hundred pallahs, fifty blue wildebeests, about twelve sassaybys, and twenty zebras. I could only make out two very fair heads in all this vast herd of pallahs, and these were not to be compared with my best Soobie heads; I therefore amused myself by watching their movements, and did not fire, having resolved to wait quietly, in the hope that koodoo, sable antelope, or wild boar would appear. At length I observed three shy, strange-looking antelopes approach with large bushy tails and furry-looking reddish-grey hair. They were three rhoode-rheboks, a buck and two does; I had never before heard that either of the species frequented these parts, and being anxious to certify that this antelope did so, I shot the buck through the heart.

The next day I again rode to the water, and soon after the horses were gone the herds of game came in and surrounded me, the same as the day before. I fired at a fine old cow wildebeest, and as the dust cleared away the gnou was to be seen standing alone, and in about ten minutes she staggered, fell, and died. I also shot one of two tearing wild boars, which,

like every other pig, squealed violently when the struggles of death came over him.

A singular circumstance occurred on the 20th. Having wounded a sassayby, he immediately commenced choking from the blood, and his body and even his legs and head swelled in a most extraordinary manner, the animal still alive, until it literally resembled a fisherman's float, when it died of suffocation.

The 21st was a bitter cold morning, with a strong wind from the south-west. I rode to the fountain before the morning star appeared, and becoming impatient of lying still, rose from my hole to examine what game had drunk during the night, when I found to my astonishment the spoor of a mighty bull elephant, which must have drunk there not many hours before. Returning in hot haste to camp I made all ready for a three-days' trip, and took up the spoor with two after-riders and six natives. It led us for five miles in an easterly course; the elephant had fed as he went along, and when we first caught sight of him was within twenty yards of us, a bushy tree nearly concealing him from our view. The dogs fought well with him, and I gave him one deadly shot before he was aware of our presence; I then hunted him into softer ground, and finished him with the tenth shot.

This fellow was the fiftieth elephant I had bagged in Africa, not to mention those I wounded, but lost.

A princely old bull buffalo, which I saw this day, lay with his very remarkable fine head on the ground, and was crouching, in the hope that we should ride past without observing him, just as an old stag or a roebuck does in Scotland.

From the quantity of buffalo's spoor on the north side of this mountain range, I made up my mind there must be some strong water on that side of the hills, and only one or two buffaloes occasionally came to drink at the fountain where I was encamped; the natives declared that there was none. I, however, on the 22nd, determined to explore, and accordingly started with Kleinboy and the Bushman. We held first about west, and then crossed the mountains by a succession of very rocky valleys and ravines, beyond which, following an old ~~no~~ footpath for about two or three miles, I had the ~~satisfac-~~

tion to discover a beautiful fountain in a deep gorge. Here was fresh spoor of black and white rhinoceros, buffalo, wildebeest, sassayby, koodoo, klipspringer, &c. My after-riders likewise discovered a ravine containing water a little to the east.

Passing the mouth of another bold ravine, we crossed well-beaten paths, which led me to suspect that this ravine also contained a fountain. When about half-way from camp, and after a sharp burst of a mile, I shot a fine old bull eland from the saddle; he carried a fine head, and was, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, in very good condition.

On the 23rd, in the forenoon, I rode to explore the suspected ravine of the day before, and having crossed the mountain chain came upon the fresh spoor of a very large troop of cow elephants leading towards the spot, which we subsequently came up with. There were perhaps from twenty-five to thirty of them, but the instant they got my wind away they went in three divisions into impenetrable cover.

I found, as I expected, a strong fountain in a solid rocky basin in the ravine I was in search of, not more than ten feet wide: it was a most interesting spot, approachable by three different rugged passes, the sides of which were furrowed by broad footpaths established there for ages. The large stones were either kicked to the side or packed into a level like a pavement; even the solid rock was worn hollow by the feet of the mighty game which most probably for many thousand years had passed over it. Here I found fresh spoor of most of the larger quadrupeds, and, resolving to play havoc by the light of the coming moon, left the glen and rode for camp.

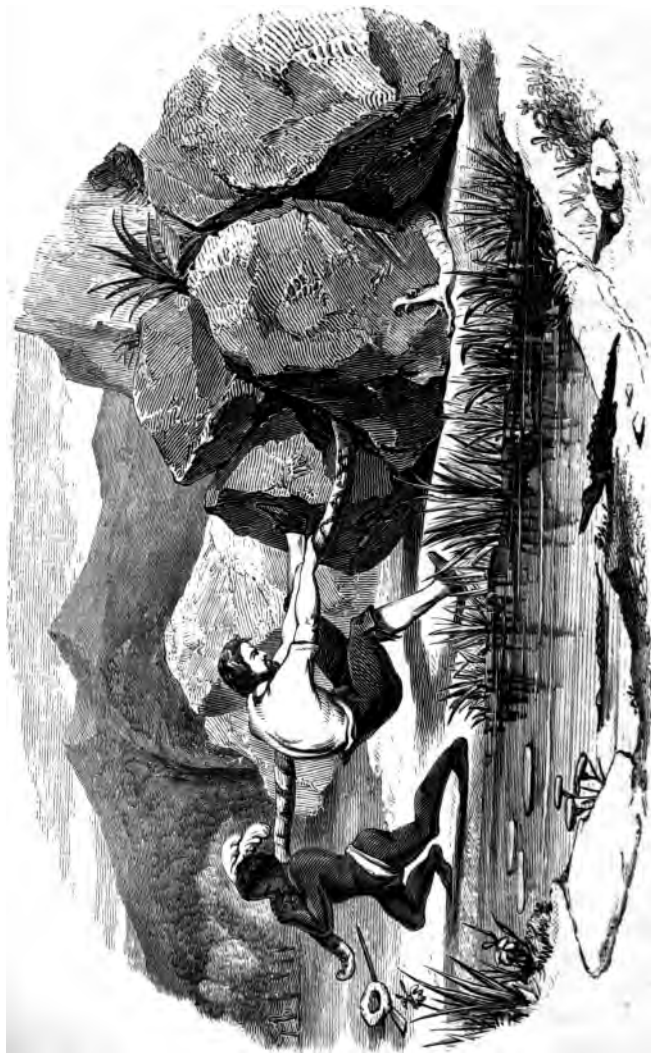
On the 25th I started with bedding and provisions to visit the fountains on the other side of the hills. At the first water we established a place of concealment with green boughs on the rock, and then held on to the farther ravine, where my men repaired an old hiding hole, building it up with fragments of rock. I then sent the steeds to a proper distance, put out my fire, and lay down. As night set in, wild dogs and a pallah approached. Presently an occasional displacement of stones announced the presence of two old bull buffaloes which came and drank, and went away without

coming within shot. Soon after fourteen more arrived, but before these had finished drinking they became alarmed and charged panic-stricken up the rugged mountain side; they had winded two lions, which came to the fountain-head, and drank within eighteen yards of me. Here they lay lapping loudly and occasionally pausing four or five minutes, but, from their light colour and the masses of rock that surrounded them, I could not see to fire. About ten minutes after they had drunk I fancied that they were still lingering, and on throwing a stone I heard their retreating steps.

Soon after this six old bull buffaloes walked up slowly from a glen behind us, standing long to listen. When the leader came within twenty yards of us, Kleinboy and I fired together, when it ran thirty yards and fell; his comrades, after considering the matter for five minutes, came on once more, and we again took the leader, which also dropped. The rest, as before, retreated, but soon returning we wounded a third, which we did not get. It was now very dark, but the buffaloes again coming up we fired, and shot another old bull. In about ten minutes lions were busy on the carcase of the first buffalo, on which they feasted till morning, taking another drink before they went away. Towards daybreak we wounded a white rhinoceros, and soon after two black rhinoceroses fought beside us, but I was too sleepy to move.

On the 26th I rose at earliest dawn to inspect the three enormous old buffaloes; one of them carried a most splendid head; the lions had cleaned out all his entrails, their spoor being immense. Having eaten some buffalo breast and liver for breakfast, and despatched Ruyter to the waggons for the natives to remove the carcasses, I and Kleinboy held through the hills to see what game might be in the next glen, which contained water. On our way thither I shot a fine old buck koodoo, putting both barrels into him at one hundred yards. As I was examining the spoor of the game by the fountain I suddenly detected a rock-snake stealing into a crevice beneath a mass of rock beside me. He was truly an enormous reptile, and, having never before dealt with this species of game, I did not exactly know how to set about capturing him. Being very desirous to preserve his skin entire, and not wishing to have





DRAWING A SNAKE

recourse to my rifle, I cut a stout and tough stick about eight feet long, and commenced the attack. Seizing him by the tail, I tried to get him out of his place of refuge; but we hauled in vain—he only drew his large folds firmer together; at length I got a rheim round the middle of his body, and Kleinboy and I pulled away in good earnest. The snake now finding the ground too hot for him, relaxed his coils, and suddenly bringing his head to the front, sprang out at us with his immense and hideous mouth opened to its largest dimensions, and before I could get out of his way he was clean out of his hole, and made a second spring, throwing himself forward about eight or ten feet and snapping his horrid fangs within a foot of my naked legs. I was not long in jumping out of his way, and getting hold of the green bough I had cut returned to the charge. The reptile now glided along at top-speed for a mass of broken rocks where he would have been beyond my reach, but before he could gain these, I caught him two or three tremendous whacks on the head. He however held on for a pool of muddy water, which he was rapidly crossing when I again belaboured him, and at length brought him to a stand still. We then hanged him by the neck to a bough of a tree, and in about fifteen minutes he appeared to be dead, but he became very troublesome during the operation of skinning, twisting his body in all manner of ways; this snake measured fourteen feet.

At night no game visited the water, being scared by the strong smell of the carrion. Lions however were so numerous that we deemed it safe to shift our position and light a fire, for they trotted past, growling fearfully. For a short time after this they kept quiet, but the fire being low they soon returned and commenced upon the buffalo the natives had left within fifty yards of us, and before morning two of them came up and looked into our bothy, when Boxer giving a sharp bark, and I suddenly awaking and popping up my head, they bounded off.

In the evening of the 28th I shot an old bull koodoo, and at night a large herd of zebras and blue wildebeest came to drink. We killed two white bull rhinoceroses, and one black bull and cow, wounding a white rhinoceros and two black ones. Three



other rhinoceroses came up, but I was too drowsy to watch any longer, and fell asleep.

Two troops of pallahs and a herd of sassaybys were at the fountain next day, when I bowled over the best stag sassayby in the troop. As we were making our beds ready on the following night a superb old bull buffalo appeared to leeward, and, taking a raking shot at eighty yards, I shot him in the heart; he ran forty-six yards and fell dead. But little game appeared during the night, scared by the blood of last night's carnage. About midnight I put a ball through a hyæna.

These fountains afforded me excellent shooting for about a fortnight longer, during the whole of which time I watched nightly in my different hiding-places, and bagged buffaloes, black and white rhinoceros, koodoos, zebras, and other game. One night, while so engaged, a horrid snake, which Kleinboy tried to kill with his loading-rod, flew up at my eye, and spat poison into it. I immediately washed it well out at the fountain, but though I endured great pain all night, the next day the eye was all right.

On the 16th of October we trekked steadily on for Sichely under a most terrific sun, and halted at sundown without water: the country was covered with spoor of all the larger varieties of game, including elephants.

On the 17th, having trekked a couple of miles, I found myself once more on the banks of the Ngotwani, which, except at its source, was this year generally dried up; however by digging we obtained sufficient water for all. The natives in charge of the loose cattle, having been supplied too well with flesh, chose to remain behind. Though my remaining stud of six horses and twelve trek-oxen were thus absent all night, I was not anxious about them, trusting to the usual good herding of the natives. When, however, they came up after breakfast, and were minus all the loose oxen, without being able to give any account of them, further than that they imagined they were with us, I despatched two of my men on horseback to take up their spoor.

On the 18th I rode up the banks of the river with my dogs to seek for waterbuck, and arriving where another considerable river's bed joins the Ngotwani, I came upon one, the

first I had ever seen. He was standing among some young thorn-trees, within sixty yards, and had his eye full upon me. Before I could pull up my horse he was off at a rapid pace, and crossed the river's bed above me ; I shouted to the dogs, and fired a shot to encourage them, but in half a minute the buck disappeared over a rocky ridge, with three or four of my best hounds within thirty yards of his stern. I knew that he would make for the nearest water, and accordingly kept my eye down the river, listening with an attentive ear for the baying of the dogs. Presently the noble buck appeared ascending a rocky pyramidal hill down the river side with the agility of a chamois, and only one dog, Boxer, my best, at his heels. I galloped down at top speed to meet him, but was too late ; however I fired a long shot to encourage the dog, and next moment, in ascending the opposite bank, my horse fell and rolled down it very nearly on the top of me ; on regaining his legs Jock declined being caught, and made off for camp, followed by my after-rider : Alert at this moment came up, having eight or ten inches of the skin of his breast and forearm ripped clean up by the waterbuck. I now fancied that I had lost the deer, but a little after I heard Boxer's voice as he came down the river side with the buck, having once more turned him. I ran up the bank at my best pace to meet them, and found the buck at bay in a deep pool, surrounded by high banks of granite rock ; he would not, however, stand, but swam through the deep water and broke bay on the opposite side. Boxer held on, and following him up the river, once more turned him to this pool ; I met them coming down the watercourse, and sent a ball into the buck's throat, which made blood flow freely from his mouth ; but he held stoutly on and plunged into the deep pool, standing at bay under a granite rock. I then headed him, and from above put a bullet between the shoulder-blades, which dropped him dead on the spot. He died as a waterbuck ought, in the deep water. My success with this noble and very beautiful antelope gave me most sincere pleasure. I had now shot noble specimens of every kind of game in South Africa, excepting the hippopotamus, and a few small bucks common in the colony. *Having contemplated the waterbuck for some time, I cut off-*

his handsome head, which I bore to camp in triumph. On the following day I succeeded, after a hot chase, in bringing down another.

On the 19th Kleinboy returned without the lost oxen: the natives said that they had been found by Bakalahari, and driven to Sichely. Next day the half of them were sent by the chief, with a message that no more had been found, but that spoor had been seen.

On the morning of the 22nd I rode into camp, after following unsuccessfully the spoor of a herd of elephants for two days in a westerly course. Having partaken of some refreshment, I saddled up two horses and rode down the bank of the Ngotwani with the Bushman, to seek for any game I might find. After riding about a mile I came suddenly upon an old male leopard, lying under the shade of a thorn grove, panting from the great heat, and although I was within sixty yards he had not heard the horses' tread. I thought he was a lioness, and, dismounting, took a rest in my saddle on the Old Grey, and sent a bullet into him. Springing to his feet he ran half way down the river side and stood to look about him, when I put a second bullet into his spotted hide, upon which he disappeared over the bank. The ground being very dangerous, I did not follow, but at once sent Ruyter back to camp for the dogs, who returned with Wolf and Boxer, very much done up with the sun, and though I rode forward and encouraged them with a shot, they would not take up his scent at all.

At length I gave it up as a lost affair, and was riding away, when I heard Wolf give tongue behind me, and, galloping back, found him at bay with the leopard, immediately beneath where I had fired at him: he was very severely wounded, and had slipped down into the river's bed and doubled back, whereby he had thrown out both the dogs and myself. As I approached he flew out upon Wolf, knocked him over, and then running up the bed of the stream, took shelter in a thick bush: Wolf, however, followed him.

this moment my other dogs, having heard the shot and bayed him fiercely. He sprang out upon

crossed the river to take shelter beneath some

posite bank, I put a third bullet

from the saddle, and as soon as he came to bay gave him a fourth, which finished him. In this conflict the unfortunate Alert was wounded, as usual, getting his face torn open and his breast laid bare by the first waterbuck. The leopard was a very fine old male.

In the evening I directed my Hottentots to watch a fine pool in the river, but fearing "Tao," they disobeyed me. Coming down the stream I met a very old bull buffalo, with a troop of beautiful water-does. This bull, which I laid low with two shots, had many old wounds by lions.

On reaching the water I was bound for, I found it very promising, and, having fastened my two horses to a tree near the river, the banks of which were clad with groves of shady thorn trees, I prepared a place of concealment close by, and lay down for the night. After I had lain some time, squadrons of buffaloes were heard coming on, until the grove on the east bank of the water immediately above me was alive with them. After some time the leaders ventured down to drink, and this was the signal for a general move into the large pool of water: on they came like a regiment of cavalry at a gallop, making a mighty din, and obscuring the air with dense clouds of dust. At length I sent a ball into one of them, when a most tremendous rush followed up the bank, where they all stood still, listening attentively; I knew the buffalo was severely wounded, but did not hear him fall. Some time after I fired at a second; this buffalo was also hard hit, but did not then fall. A little after I fired at a third on the same spot, which ran forty yards, and dropping, groaned fearfully: this at once induced a number of the others to butt their dying comrade, according to their benevolent custom. I then crept in towards them, and, firing my fourth shot, a second buffalo ran forward a few yards, and falling, groaned as the last; her comrades, coming up, served her in the same manner. A second time I crept in, and, firing a fifth shot, a third buffalo ran forward and fell close to her dying comrades: in a few minutes all the other buffaloes made off, and the sound of teeth tearing at the flesh was immediately heard. Thinking it was the hyenas, I fired a shot to scare them from the flesh, and, being anxious to inspect *the heads of the buffaloes*, went forward with the native

who accompanied me. We were within about five yards of the nearest buffalo, when I observed a yellow mass lying alongside of him, and at the same instant a lion gave a deep growl. I thought it was all over with me, my companion shouted "Tao!" and, springing away, instantly commenced blowing shrilly through a charmed piece of bone which he wore on his necklace. I also retreated to my hole, and was soon asleep, the native keeping watch over our destinies. Some time after midnight more lions were heard coming from other airts, and the one we had first seen commenced roaring so loudly that the native thought proper to awake me. He also wanted to drink, and held right away for the two unfortunate horses, roaring terribly. I felt rather alarmed for their safety; but, trusting that he had had flesh enough for one night, I lay still, and listened attentively. In a few minutes, to my utter horror, I heard him spring upon one of the steeds with an angry growl, and dash him to the earth; the horse gave a slight groan, and all was still. Soon after this "Tao" was once more to be heard munching the buffalo, and in a few minutes he came forward roaring most terribly, and walking up and down, as if meditating some mischief. I now thought it high time to make a fire, and, quickly collecting some dry reeds and sticks, in half a minute we had a cheerful blaze. The lion had not yet got our wind, and moved forward to find out what the deuce was up; but, not seeing to his entire satisfaction from the top of the bank, was proceeding to descend by a game-path into the river-bed within a few yards of us, when I happened at the very moment to go to the spot to fetch more wood, and, being entirely concealed from the lion's view above by the intervening high reeds, we actually met face to face!

The first notice I got was his sudden spring to one side, accompanied by repeated angry growls, whilst I involuntarily made a convulsive spring backwards, at the same time giving a fearful shriek, such as I never before remember uttering, for I fancied as he growled that he was coming upon me. We now heaped on more wood, and kept up a very strong fire till day broke, the lions feasting beside us all the time, notwithstanding *the proceedings of the little native, who, with a true Bechuan*

spirit, lamenting the loss of so much good flesh, kept continually shouting and pelting them with flaming brands.

When it was day I rose and inspected the buffaloes. The three that had fallen were fine old cows; two of them had been partly consumed by the lions. I then went to look at the steeds, and found the sand around them covered with the lion's spoor. He had sprung upon the Old Grey, but had done him no further injury than scratching his back through the skin; perhaps he had been scared by the rheims, or, on discovering his spare condition, had preferred the buffalo.

On the 24th we held up the Ngotwani, halting at the fine large pool of water where I had shot the three cow buffaloes two nights before. Ruyter and some natives whom I had left to look after the flesh, reported lions to have surrounded them all night, coming boldly up within a few yards, and only retreating when burning brands were sent flying at their heads.

In the forenoon I shot a very beautifully coloured wild goose with my Moore, putting two bullets through him, and made a clever shot at two wild geese, waiting until their heads were in a line, when I pinked them both with one bullet. At night the buffaloes capered about the banks of the Ngotwani, and three or four old lions were roaring close to me. In the course of the night I fired four long shots at the buffaloes, and towards morning, a very large lion and a lioness presenting themselves on the horizon of the bank, about twenty yards above me, I sent a ball into the gentleman, when he bounded off, and presently was heard growling as if dying. I could hear the lioness inviting him to stand up, to which he objected, growling fearfully. In the morning I arose to see what game had died, and found two fine old cow buffaloes with very handsome heads, but, to my great regret, both the lion and his mate had disappeared.

On the 26th I was in the saddle long before the sun rose, and rode down the river to seek waterbuck, accompanied by all my dogs. I had not been out long when I dropped a cow buffalo and two calves, one of which sank to the bottom, but soon after floated. The cow carried a very fine head, but

unfortunately a bullet had splintered the point of one of the horns.

I now held on up the side of the river for a couple of miles—the banks densely wooded—and then turned my face for home, having had a good bathe, and been saluted by a crocodile, who popped up his nose close beside me. Riding at a little distance from the river's bank, I came upon four waterbucks; the dogs at once gave chase, and broke a buck from the herd, which in one minute was standing at bay in the river, when I galloped up, and, dismounting, shot him. I stalked another, in true Highland fashion, and when within seventy yards sent my right ball through his shoulder; following his bloody spoor I heard groans on the bank a little above me, and, going forward, found the noble waterbuck dying; his head was borne in triumph to camp before my after-rider.

The morning of the 27th was extremely hot, but I nevertheless resolved to pack up and start for Chouaney. On the march one of my waggon's after-wheels came off, but the axletree very fortunately escaped being broken. We reached Sichely's a little after sundown.

The next day was deliciously cloudy, with some slight showers of rain. In the evening the chief came down to see me, bringing my four lost oxen, which he had at length made up his mind to restore.

I now proceeded slowly by way of Lotlokane, Motito, and Campbellsdorp, reaching the Vaal River on the 11th of November, but owing to the great body of water coming down, I was obliged to wait here for some days.

On the 16th, after several attempts to cross the river, we had to desist, leaving our heaviest waggon in the middle of the stream. I rested but little that night, and I had good reason to be anxious, for, if the river had risen, my waggon would have been carried away, and, as it contained nearly all my worldly property, I should have been utterly ruined.

I had, however, the gratification to find at daydawn that the Vaal had fallen a little during the night; and after incredible exertions and much assistance from parties of Griquas and several spans of fresh oxen, we dragged the heaviest waggon

without a check right out to the shallow water on the border of the river, and outspanned on the top of the high bank.

The next move was to get the other waggons through. The Griquas at first made some demur, saying that it was Sunday, but I very soon got rid of their objection by telling them I would prepare some food and coffee for them, when they set to work with a will, and in two hours the three waggons were brought safely through.

On the 8th we entered the village of Colesberg, and all the forenoon I was busy off-loading two of my vehicles. We spread out the curiosities in the market-place, making no end of a parade: it was truly a very remarkable sight, and struck the beholders with astonishment.

On the 13th I set out on my way to Grahamstown, passing on the 17th the Thebus flats, and on the 25th reached Fort Beaufort, where I dined with some old acquaintances at the mess of the 7th.

On the 29th we marched to the Fish River. Here I found about sixty waggons waiting the falling of the river to get through. Some of us set to work to clear away a bank of mud on the opposite side, after which a good many waggons, lightly laden, crossed the river; but on attempting to bring through my large waggon, it stuck fast, and was only extricated with the help of another span; it was time, for the river increased fast, and in another half-hour was a rapid torrent, at least ten feet deep.

By the 1st of February the river had fallen considerably, and after some work in clearing away the mud on both sides, I got my second waggon through about eleven A.M. I then inspanned and trekked on to Boatasberg; reaching Grahama-town on the 2nd, where my ivory and ostrich-feathers realised somewhere about 1000l.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

START ON ANOTHER ELEPHANT-SHOOTING EXPEDITION — CROCODILES  
— HIPPOPOTAMI — SEROLOMOOTLOOQUE ANTELOPE.

BEING undecided as to my future plans, I remained in Grahams-town for some weeks. At last I decided upon making another hunting expedition, and started for the far interior on the 11th of March, having resolved to try a short cut through the territories of the chief Mahura. This I took, and crossed the Vaal river on the 5th of May, far to the eastward of my former track.

On the 7th we entered upon the broad strath through which the Hart flows, and early on the 8th held up it parallel with that river. This day we came upon the largest pack of wild dogs I had ever seen; there were about forty of them, and when my dogs chased them they turned about and showed fight.

On the 12th we marched before breakfast to within three miles of Mahura, and, having breakfasted, called on Mr. Ross, the resident missionary. We walked together to the town and visited Mahura and his brother; the expressions of neither of these men were at all in their favour. Mr. Ross informed me that the former was at present meditating war upon a tribe to the north-east, and also that Mochuarra, the chief at Motito, intended to attack Sichely.

I obtained six karosses from Mahura in barter for ammunition, and presented him with a whipstick and two pounds of powder. About midday I inspanned, holding a spoor of three waggons some months old, which it was said would lead me into my old course at Great Chooi; and on the 20th we reached the bank of the Meritsane, two miles below my old spoor. Spoor of the black rhinoceros, pallah, koodoo, and hartebeests were seen this day for the first time.

On the 22nd, having proceeded about four miles, we left

the main road to Bakatla, and held across-country to our right for my old outspanning-place at Lotlokane; I did not find the vast herds of game congregated here as usual, water being everywhere abundant and the grass over the whole country much higher than my oxen.

On the 23rd I made the Molopo, about one mile lower down than the drift. This darling little river is here completely concealed by lofty reeds and long grass, which densely clothe its margin to a distance of at least a hundred yards. On each side reitbuck were very abundant. Riding up the river side I observed two old lions come slowly out from the adjoining cover and slant off toward the reeds. I galloped forward to endeavour to get between them and the river, when the lions, imagining we were some species of game, did not attempt to retreat, but stood looking in wonder until I was within fifty yards of them, and right between the last Tao and the reeds. I was struck with wonder and admiration at the majestic and truly awful appearance which these two noble old animals presented.

They were both very large: the first, a "schwart fore-life," or black-maned lion,—the last, which was the finest and the oldest, a "chiell fore-life," or yellow-maned lion. The black-maned lion, after looking at me for half a minute, walked slowly forward and bounded into the reeds; his dark-brown comrade would fain have done the same, but I was now between him and his retreat. He seemed not at all to like my appearance, or to feel certain what I was, and, fancying that I had not observed him, lay down in the long grass. Having loaded in the saddle, I waited a minute for all my dogs to come up, and then rode slowly forward towards the lion as if to pass within a few yards of him.

This move was fatal to me, for I laid open the ground of retreat between the lion and the reeds; and on coming within twenty or twenty-five yards of him, and in the act of reining in my horse to fire, he took his eye off me, examined the ground between him and the reeds, and, seeing the coast clear, suddenly bounded forward, and, before I could even dismount from my panic-stricken steed, was at the edge of the reeds, which he entered with a lofty spring, making the water fly as

he pitched into them. Several of the dogs followed him, but immediately retreated, barking, and evidently in great fear.

On the 27th we trekked to Chouaney, and remained there next day to trade. I obtained two natives from Sichely to accompany me to the Limpopo, their pay being a musket each.

About midday we marched, and halted near the Ngotwani, along whose banks my course lay. The country through which this river twines is sandy, and in general covered with dense thorny jungle, which greatly impeded our progress, having constantly to cut a passage before the waggons could advance. Several lions commenced roaring soon after the sun went down. On the evening of the next day I shot a magnificent buffalo which carried a splendid head.

On the 8th of June we made the long-wished-for Limpopo, and I was greatly struck with the first view of this most interesting river: the trees along its banks were of prodigious size and great beauty.

The next day I rode ahead of the waggons with Ruyter, and shot a waterbuck; this animal and the pallah were very abundant. I presently gave chase to a herd of the former to try their speed, but as they led me into a labyrinth of marshy vleys, I gave it up. After this I came upon a huge crocodile basking on the sand, which instantly dashed into the stream. Several species of wild duck and a variety of water-fowl were also extremely numerous and very tame; guinea-fowl, three kinds of a large partridge, and two kinds of quail were likewise plentiful. I killed an old pallah and a waterbuck this day, but did not bag the latter.

On the 10th I rode ahead of my waggons at daydawn, and saw, for the first time, the spoor of sea-cows or hippopotami; it was very similar to the spoor of borèlé, or black rhinoceros, but larger, and had four toe-marks instead of three.

In the afternoon I again sallied forth with the Bushman and fresh horses, and, directing the waggons to take the straight course, followed the windings of the river. Here I beheld three enormous crocodiles basking on the sand on the opposite side, and was astonished at their size: one of them seemed to be sixteen or eighteen feet in length, with a body as thick as *that of an ox*. On observing us they plunged into the dead

water, but, the next minute, one of them popping up his terrible head in the middle of the stream, I made a beautiful shot, and sent a ball through his brains; the convulsions of death which followed were truly awful. At first he sank to the shot, but, instantly striking the bottom with his tail, rose to the surface, where he struggled violently, sometimes on his back, sometimes on his belly, with at one time his head and fore feet above the stream, and immediately after his tail and hind legs, the former lashing the water with a force perfectly astounding. Clouds of sand accompanied him in all his movements, the strong stream carrying him along with it, till at length the struggle of death was over, and he sank to rise no more.

After this I detected a small crocodile on the sand, and gave him a shot, when he instantly plunged into the river; a little farther I wounded a third, and eventually a fourth.

We now got into a fine green turn of the river, and came suddenly upon a troop of five or six beautiful leopards. At the next bend of the stream three huge crocodiles were seen on the opposite side. Stalking within easy range, I shot one of them in the head, and again through the ribs. On receiving this he kept running round and round, snapping his horrid jaws fearfully at his own wounded side. Galloping to my waggons, I came suddenly upon a lion and lioness lying in the grass below a gigantic old mimosa, and took a couple of shots at the lion, missing him with my first, but wounding him with the second barrel, when he rose with several angry short growls and bounded off. On reaching camp, my men informed me they had just seen two huge hippopotami in the river beneath. Proceeding to the spot, I shot one, putting three balls into his head, when he sank, but night setting in we lost him.

At dawn on the 12th, a noise was heard for about twenty minutes up the river, like the sound of the sea, accompanied by the lowing of buffaloes; it was a herd crossing the river. I rode in the direction of the sounds to look at them. It was in a sequestered bend of the river, where the banks for several acres were densely clad with lofty reeds and grass which towered above my head as I sat on my horse's back. Beyond the reeds and grass were trees of all sizes, forming a

dense shade ; this is the general character of the banks of the Limpopo, as far as I had yet seen. I was slowly returning to camp, when, behold, an antelope of the most exquisite beauty, utterly unknown to sportsmen or naturalists, stood broadside in my path, looking me full in the face. It was a princely old buck of the serolomootlooque of the Bakalahari, or bushbuck of the Limpopo, and carried a very fine wide-set pair of horns. On beholding him, I was struck with wonder and delight ; my heart beat with excitement ; I sprang from my saddle, but before I could fire a shot this gem of beauty bounded into the reeds, and was lost to my sight. At that moment I would have given half what I possessed in the world for a shot at that lovely antelope, and at once resolved not to proceed farther on my expedition until I had captured him, although it should cost me the labour of a month.

I immediately gave my horse to my after-rider, and with my rifle on full-cock and at the ready proceeded to stalk with extreme caution the length and breadth of the cover, but I stalked in vain ; the antelope had vanished, and was nowhere to be found. I then returned slowly up the river's bank towards my camp, and had ridden to within a few hundred yards of the waggons, meditating how I should best circumvent the serolomootlooque, when once more this lovely antelope crossed my path ; I had been unwittingly driving him before me along the bank of the river. He trotted like a roebuck into the thick cover, and then stood broadside among the thorn bushes, when I fired and missed him ; but he gave me a second chance ; and before my rifle was down from my shoulder the serolomootlooque lay prostrate in the dust. The ball had cut the skin open along his ribs, and, entering his body, passed along his neck and lodged in his brains, where we found it on preparing the head for stuffing. I was not a little gratified at my good fortune in securing this new and valuable trophy ; he was one of the most perfect antelopes I had ever beheld, both in symmetry and colour. I had him immediately conveyed to camp, where I took his measurement, and wrote a correct description of him for the benefit of naturalists, christening him the "*Antelopus Roualeyni*," or "*bushbuck of the Limpopo*."

The next day I shot an old buck pallah, and having ridden a few miles farther came upon two fine old waterbucks fighting, when I stalked in within a hundred yards, and shot them both right and left; the heads were fair specimens, but, having many better, I reluctantly left them to perish in the field. Hereabouts I found fresh spoor of hippopotami of the preceding night. I followed this spoor to a considerable distance along the margin of the river, and at last came upon the troop. They were lying in a secluded bend of the river, beneath some gigantic shady trees; the water in heavy floods had thrown up large banks of sand at this spot, in which they had hollowed out their beds. Dense underwood and reeds surrounded the place, and it was close to a very deep and broad stream, into which their footpaths led in every direction.

I was first apprised of my proximity to them by a loud cry from one old bull, who took alarm at the sudden flight of a species of heron: his cry was not unlike that of an elephant. He stood in water that reached half-way up his side, shaking his short ears in the sun, and every half-minute disappeared beneath the stream, when, again showing half his body, he uttered a loud snorting noise. On observing him I dismounted, and every time he disappeared ran in, until I stood behind the tall reeds, within twenty yards of him. Here I might have dropped him with a single ball, but I unfortunately made up my mind not to molest them until the next day, when I should have men to assist me in getting them out. Presently observing me, he dived, and swam round a shady promontory into the deep stream, where he and his comrades kept up a continual loud blowing. I returned to camp, and, having ordered my men to inspan, tried a drift on horseback, and crossed the Limpopo, but, the water coming over my saddle, I did not attempt to bring my waggons through. We accordingly held our course on the north-western bank of the river, and outspanned about a mile above the place where I had found the hippopotami.

At sundown the sea-cows commenced their march up the river, passing opposite our camp, and making the most extraordinary sounds—blowing, snorting, and roaring, sometimes crashing through the reeds, sometimes swimming gently, and *splashing and sporting* through the water. There being a little

moonlight. I went down with my man Carey, and sat some time by the river-side, contemplating these wonderful monsters: it was a truly grand and very extraordinary scene; and the opposite bank of the stream being clad with trees of gigantic size and great beauty, they added greatly to the interest of the picture.

On the 14th I proceeded with three after-riders, two double-barrelled rifles, and about a hundred rounds of ammunition, to the spot where I had yesterday found the hippopotami; but they had taken alarm, and were all gone. The spoor leading up the river, I rode along the banks, examining every pool, until my steed was quite knocked up, but found not a single sea-cow; they had made short cuts at every bend, sometimes taking the direct line on my side, and sometimes on the other. Finding that I must sleep in the feldt if I followed on, I despatched Ruyter to camp for my blankets, coffee-kettle, biscuit, &c., and fresh horses, and having penetrated every corner of the dense jungle that overhung the river, began to be very hungry, when I had the good fortune to kill a young doe of the "*Antelopus Roualeynei*," which in a few minutes was roasting on the fire.

My yellow steed "*Flux*," about my very best, died this day of horse-sickness. After luncheon I continued my search for hippopotami, and just as the sun went down started an old fellow from beneath some tall reeds, which hung over a deep broad pool. On hearing me approach he dived with a loud splash, and immediately re-appeared with a blowing noise a little farther up, and within twenty yards of the bank; having looked about him, he again dived, and continued his course up the river, which could be traced from the wave above. I ran in front of him, and when he came up the third time, sent the bullet into his brain, when he floundered for one moment at the surface, and sank to the bottom. There he most probably remained for only half an hour, but in a few minutes night set in, and I had thus the extreme mortification to lose my hippopotamus, the second one I had shot. We slept beneath a tree that night. In the course of the following day I shot three large crocodiles; one of them lay upon an island, and not regain the water.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

CROSS THE LIMPOPO — RASH ENCOUNTER WITH A HIPPOPOTAMUS —  
TWO SEROLÔMOOTLOOQUES SHOT — SELEKAS TOWN — TRADING —  
HIPPOPOTAMI — AUDACITY OF THE LION.

ON the 17th of June, having found a good drift, I crossed the Limpopo with my waggons, and drew them up in a green and shady spot.

On the 18th a dense mist hung over the river, which as we advanced became more promising for sea-cow; at every turn there occurred deep, still pools, and occasional sandy islands, densely clad with lofty reeds. Above and beyond these reeds stood trees of immense age and gigantic size, beneath which grew a long and very rank description of grass, on which the sea-cow delights to pasture.

I soon found fresh spoor, and after holding on for several miles came, just as the sun was going down, upon the fresh lairs of four hippopotami. They had been lying asleep on the margin of the river, and, hearing me come crackling through the reeds, plunged into the deep water. I at once saw that they were newly started, for the froth and bubbles were still on the spot where they had dashed in; and next moment I heard them blowing a little way down the river. I then headed them, but with considerable difficulty, owing to the cover and the reeds, and at length came down right above where they were standing. It was a broad part of the stream, with a sandy bottom, and the water came half-way up their sides; there were three cows and an old bull, and, though alarmed, they did not appear aware of the extent of the impending danger.

I took the sea-cow next me, and with my first ball gave her a mortal wound, knocking loose the great plate on the top of her skull, when she commenced plunging round and round, and then occasionally remained still, sitting for a few minutes on the same spot. On hearing the report of my rifle two of the



others took up stream, and the fourth dashed down the river, trotting along at a smart pace, like oxen, as long as the water was shallow. I was now in a state of very great anxiety about my wounded sea-cow, for I feared that she would get into deep water, and be lost like the two last. To settle the matter, therefore, I fired a second shot from the bank, which, entering the roof of her skull, passed out through her eye; after which she kept constantly splashing round and round in a circle in the middle of the river. I had great fears of the crocodiles, and did not know whether the sea-cow might not attack me; my anxiety to secure her, however, overcame all hesitation, so, divesting myself of my leathers, and armed with a sharp knife, I dashed into the water, which at first took me up to my arm-pits, but the middle was shallower.

As I approached Behemoth I halted for a moment, ready to dive under the water if she attacked me; but though her eye looked very wicked, she was stunned, and did not know what she was doing; so, running in upon her, and seizing her short tail, I attempted to incline her course to land. It was extraordinary what enormous strength she still had in the water; I could not guide her in the slightest degree; and she continued to splash, plunge, and blow, and make her circular course, carrying me along with her, as if I was a fly on her tail. Finding this gave me but a poor hold, I took out my knife, and, as the only means of securing her, cut two deep parallel incisions through the skin on her stern, and lifting this skin from the flesh, so that I could get in my two hands, I made use of it as a handle; and after some desperate hard work, sometimes pushing and sometimes pulling, the sea-cow continuing her circular course all the time, and I holding on like grim Death, eventually succeeded in bringing this gigantic and most powerful animal to the bank. My Bushman now brought me a stout buffalo-rhein from my horse's neck, which I passed through the opening in the thick skin, and moored Behemoth to a tree; I then sent a ball through the centre of her head, and she was numbered with the dead.

At this moment my waggons fortunately came up, when we took down a span of our best oxen and a pair of rhein-chains, and succeeded in dragging the sea-cow high and dry. We



A WALTZ WITH A HIPPOPOTAMUS.



were all astonished at her enormous size, she appeared to be about five feet broad across the belly ; and I could see much beauty in this animal, so admirably formed for the amphibious life to which it was destined by Nature.

We were occupied all the morning of the 19th cutting up and salting the select parts of the sea-cow ; she was extremely fat, more resembling a pig than a cow or a horse ; of the skull I took particular charge. In the evening I shot a brace of waterbucks, after which I rode to the summit of an adjacent hill, from which I obtained a fine view of the surrounding country. Many bold blue mountain ranges stood to the north and north-west ; to the east and south-east were also mountain-ranges ; whilst to the south a very remarkable light-coloured rock, in the form of a dome, shot high above the level of the surrounding forest.

The next day I shot a lovely serolomootlooque, and unluckily cut his beautiful horn off at the base. His head, before I destroyed it, was perhaps the finest along the banks of the Limpopo ; the horns were of extraordinary length, and had a most perfect set and turn. Later in the day another fell to my rifle.

After depositing the buck in my larder, I proceeded many miles along the borders of the river, and on emerging into an open space running parallel with the stream came upon large troops of pallahs, blue wildebeests, zebras, and, to my utter astonishment, a herd of about ten bull elands ; for I was not aware that they would be met with in these parts. Delighted with the rencontre, I selected the best bull eland, a ponderous grey old fellow, and after a sharp ride of a few miles brought him back close on the river, when I shot him in the shoulder, holding out my rifle with one hand, like a pistol. Having kindled a fire, and roasted a portion of him, I skinned the side which lay uppermost, that I might have some covering, for I had neither coat nor waistcoat, and the night was coming on ; when, however, the sun went down, signal shots disclosed to me the position of the waggons.

On the 21st I went some distance down the river with Ruyter in quest of sea-cow and serolomootloques ; we found fresh spoor of the former, and I shot one doe of the latter. As

I rode along I saw six crocodiles and a great number of monkeys of two varieties; also several deadly serpents, one of them a cobra, very similar to that of India. Bees were very abundant along the Limpopo, the gigantic hollow trees affording them snug homes; my natives brought me some excellent honey, which they found in an old ant-hill. I observed along the banks of the river enormous trees from three to four feet in diameter, cut down by the Bakalahari, only for the sake of the honey which they contained; the natives fell them with immense trouble and perserverance with little tomahawks of their own make.

The ant-hills on the Limpopo and throughout this part of Africa are truly wonderful; it is common to see them upwards of twenty feet high, and one hundred feet in circumference. They are composed of clay, which hardens in the sun like a brick, and have generally one tall tapering spire in the middle of the fabric, the base being surrounded with similar projections of smaller height. The natives informed me that we were opposite to the tribe Seleka, whom they tried to persuade me to visit, but I resolved to stick to the Limpopo.

On the 22nd we came upon the Macoolwey, a large clear running river, joining the Limpopo from the south-east: here I bagged a princely waterbuck.

On the succeeding day, after experiencing great difficulty in finding a drift, I crossed the Limpopo, but failed to fall in with serolomootloques; I therefore retraced my steps down the river to a spot where buffaloes had drunk on the preceding evening, and there spent the night.

In the morning I started one old buck serolomootloque, but did not fire: he went off barking exactly like a roebuck, which they very much resemble in form, gait, voice, and habits. Following this buck, I started two does, one of which I shot. Here I left one of my after-riders, and taking Ruyter with me, rode down the bank of the Limpopo to explore. I found the river wearing quite a different appearance below its junction, being very much broader, indeed, nearly as large as the Orange River. Crocodiles of enormous size were to be seen at every turn, and I shot four huge fellows. We then fell in with a large rock serpent, or "metsapallah," about eleven feet long,

which I shot through the head, and brought to camp slung round my neck.

Having resolved over-night to rob a colony of bees of their precious stores, I started with a tin-pail for the nest, in an old hollow tree. Here we kindled a large fire in front of the hole, and having smoked them with dry grass, took out the honey, which was excellent; I got, however, about fifty stings on my hands and arms. In the afternoon I inspanned, and crossed the Macoolwey, a few miles above its junction with the Limpopo, reaching that river by moonlight. Hippopotami were heard snorting, and lions roared near us all night long. Next day I had the good luck to shoot two very fine old buck serolomootlooques.

On the 27th, whilst riding along the river's bank, some distance beyond the limits of yesterday's gallop, I heard a loud plunge, which was immediately followed by the welcome blowing sound of sea-cows. I instantly divested myself of my leather trousers, and went into the reeds, where I came suddenly upon a crocodile of average size, lying in a shallow back stream, and, on his attempting to gain the main river, shot him dead on the spot; this was the first crocodile I had managed to lay my hands upon, although I had killed many. The sound of my rifle alarmed the sea-cows; some took up and some down the river. Soon after breakfast, the chief Seleka, accompanied by a number of his aristocracy, paid me a visit.

On the 28th, he sent men down the river, before it was clear, to look for sea-cows; and they soon came running after me to say that they had found some; I followed accordingly, and in a long, broad, and deep bend, came upon four hippopotami, two full-grown cows, a small one, and a calf. At the tail of this pool was a strong and rapid stream, which thundered along in Highland fashion over large masses of dark rock, and on coming to the shady bank, I could at first only see one old cow and a calf. When they dived, I ran into the reeds, and as the cow rose shot her in the head; she, however, got away down the river, and I lost her. The other three took up the river, and became very shy, remaining under the water for five minutes at a time, and then popping their heads up only for a few seconds; I accordingly kept behind

the reeds, in hope of their dismissing their alarms. Presently the two smaller ones, apparently no longer frightened, showed their entire heads, remaining above water for a minute; but the third, which was by far the largest, and which I thought must be a bull, continued extremely shy, diving under the water for ten minutes and more, letting us see her face but for a second, and making a blowing like a whale, returning to the bottom. I stood there with rifle at my shoulder, and my eye on the sight, until I was quite tired. I thought I should never get a chance at her, and had just resolved to let fly at one of the smaller ones, when she shoved up half her head and looked about her; I fired, the ball cracked loudly below her ear, and the huge body of the sea-cow came floundering to the top. Though not dead, she had lost her senses, and continued swimming round and round, sometimes beneath and sometimes at the surface of the water, creating a fearful commotion, when I finished her with a shot in the neck, upon which she instantly sank to the bottom, and disappeared in the strong and rapid torrent at the tail of the sea-cow hole. Here she remained for a long time, and I thought that I had lost her, but the natives said she would soon reappear, and while taking my breakfast there was a loud hue-and-cry that the hippopotamus had floated and was sailing down the river. It was so, and my Hottentots swam in and brought her to the bank; her flesh proved most excellent. In the afternoon I shot a splendid old waterbuck, with a princely head, which I kept.

The next day I killed a very fine buck serolomootlooque, and again rode down the river's bank, with two after-riders, to seek for hippopotami, which the natives reported would be found in a pool in advance, where another river joined the Limpopo. After riding a short distance I found the banks unusually green and shady, and in a broad, deep, and long still bend of the stream the game I sought.

They were lying in their sandy beds among the rank reeds at the river-side, and on hearing me galloping over the gravelly shingle, the deposit of some great flood, they plunged into their native stronghold in dire alarm, and commenced *blowing*, snorting, and uttering a sound very similar to that

made by the musical instrument called a serpent. It was a fairish place for an attack, so, divesting myself of my leather trousers, I ordered my after-riders to remain silent, and then crept cautiously forward, determined not to fire a shot until I had thoroughly examined the herd to see if there was not a bull, and at all events to secure, if possible, the very finest head amongst them.

The troop consisted of about fourteen hippopotami; ten of them being a little farther down the stream than the other four. Having carefully examined these ten, I made out two decidedly larger than the others. I then crept a little distance up the river behind the reeds, to obtain a view of the four, and saw that they were two enormous old cows, with two large calves beside them. The old ones had exactly the same size of head as the two best cows below. I accordingly chose what I thought the best of these two, and, making a fine shot at the side of her head, at once disabled her. She disappeared for a few seconds, and then came floundering to the surface, swimming round and round, diving and reappearing with a loud splash and a blowing noise, and getting slowly down the river, until I re-attacked and finished her, about an hour after, a quarter of a mile farther down. The other sea-cows were now greatly alarmed, showing, and that only occasionally, but a small part of their heads. I managed, however, to select one of the three remaining ones, and, making a perfect shot, sent a bullet crashing into her brain; this caused instantaneous death, and she sank to the bottom. I then wounded two more sea-cows in the head, both of which I lost; the others were so alarmed and cunning that it was impossible to do anything with them.

The one I had first shot was now resting with half her body above water on a sandbank in the Limpopo, at the mouth of the river Lepalala, which was broad, clear, and rapid, and from this position I started her with one bullet in the shoulder and another in the side of the head; this last shot set her in motion, when she commenced struggling in the water in the most extraordinary manner, disappearing for a few seconds and then coming up like a great whale, setting the whole river in a vortex. Presently she took away down the stream,



but, returning, I killed her with a shot in the middle of the forehead. This proved a most magnificent specimen of the female hippopotamus. She far surpassed the brightest conceptions I had formed of her, being a larger, a more lively, and in every way a more wonderful and interesting animal than certain writers had led me to expect. On securing this fine sea-cow, I immediately cut off her head and placed it high and dry, and this was a work of considerable difficulty for four men. We left the body in the water, being, of course, unable to do anything with it there, and it was well I secured the head when I did, for next morning the crocodiles had dragged away the carcass.

The body of the other huge sea-cow which I had shot in the brain now floated, and became stationary within about twenty yards of the opposite bank of the river. I accordingly held down the river to the tail of the pool, where the stream was broad and rapid, and less likely to hold crocodiles, and, although cold and worn out with fatigue, swam across to secure my game. Two of my Hottentots swam over to my assistance; but just as we were going to lay hold of the animal she became disengaged from the invisible fetters that had held her, a gigantic old tree that some flood had lodged in the bottom of the pool, and floated down the middle of the river; when she neared the tail of the pool we swam in, and, inclining her course to shore, stranded her on a fine gravel bank.

This truly magnificent specimen was about the same size as the first, and apparently older, but her teeth were not quite so thick. Ordering the natives at once to cut off her huge head, and having seen it safely deposited on the bank along with that of her comrade, I held for my waggons, having to cross the Lepalala to reach them. I was very much knocked up, but most highly gratified at my good fortune in first killing, and then securing, two out of the four best sea cows in a herd of fourteen.

On the 1st of July I marched to the town of the Baseleka, which I reached in about four hours, having crossed the Lepalala on the way. Seleka's town is built on the top and sides of a steep and precipitous white quartz rock, which rises abruptly, and forms a very remarkable feature in the green

forest scenery that surrounds it. In the evening the chief brought down four fairish bull elephants' teeth, which I purchased for four muskets.

On the morrow I held east with Seleka and about a hundred and fifty of his men, to look for elephants, they having heard from the Bakalahari of a troop of bulls. As the country appeared to me well adapted for the sport, and as I regretted not a little that my men and a good stud of horses should be idle at the waggons while they might be earning me fifty pounds once or twice a week, I armed and mounted John Stofolus and Carey, both of whom vaunted their courage and skill, and, in the event of our finding, instructed them to select a good elephant, and, if not able to kill him, at least to hold him in view until I had finished mine, which I promised to do as quickly as possible, and then to come to their assistance.

We had not proceeded far from the white rock when we entered a forest frequented by elephants, and very soon came upon the fresh spoor of a troop of about ten fine bulls. The spooring was admirably conducted, the old chief taking the greatest care of the wind, keeping his followers well back, and maintaining silence, extending picquets in advance, and to the right and left, and ordering them to ascend to the summits of the tallest trees to obtain a correct view of the surrounding forest. Presently the mighty game was found, and Old Schwartland, and my dogs all in the couples, eight in number, were alongside me, when having obtained a blink of one of the elephants, I dashed forward and gave him a shot as he passed me, and, riding hard under his stern, yelled like a demon to clear him from his comrades and to bring the dogs to my assistance. They came, as I expected, to my elephant, and I killed him from the saddle in a business-like style, loading and firing with great rapidity; he took from fifteen to twenty shots before he fell. All this time I listened in vain for shots from John or Carey, but the former did not even consider himself safe in the same forest, and had slunk away from Carey while in sight of a splendid bull, nor was anything more heard of him that day. Carey did but little better, for *he lost his elephant immediately, one charge being sufficient.*

The natives were now fighting with an immense old bull, and riding in their direction I came upon the elephant, which, although red with blood, and resembling a porcupine from the number of the assagais, was little the worse for all he had received. I then attacked him, and, with eight or ten shots, ended his career.

Next morning, the Bakalahari reported that they had heard elephants during the night, and we soon took up the spoor of one old fellow, which led us into a forest thoroughly ploughed up and broken with elephants. Here this fine fellow joined a glorious squadron of from twenty to thirty mighty bulls, and, shouting to the dogs, I was instantly in the middle of them. Then followed a wondrous scene; the elephants, panic-stricken, charged forward, levelling the forest before them, trumpeting, with trunks and tails aloft.

Looking back over my shoulder I beheld them come crashing on behind and within a few yards of me. I then pressed forward, overtook about ten bulls, rode under their sterns, chose the best, and, yelling at the top of my voice, separated him from his comrades, and brought my dogs to my assistance. In a few minutes he had many mortal wounds, and at last fell, having received twenty-nine balls, twenty-seven of them being in a very correct part. This was an enormous first-rate bull; but his teeth, though large, not being the best in the troop, I felt very much dissatisfied.

On the forenoon of the 5th I traded with Seleka for karosses of pallah's skin and elephants' tusks, and in the evening climbed to the summit of the quartz rock on which the citadel of Seleka is situated. Here I had an excellent view of the surrounding country; chains of mountains of moderate height shot above the level forest in every direction, but mostly to the east and south.

The next day I took the field for elephants, accompanied by the greater part of the Seleka tribe, and following the bank of the river Lepalala, which we eventually crossed. Having proceeded some distance through a tract but little frequented by elephants, we discovered a huge and most daring old lion, with his partner and a troop of very small cubs. I had passed him within about sixty yards, and was a little above him on the hill before I was aware of his presence, of which he gave

us notice by loud growls, advancing boldly with open jaws towards the natives. These fled before him; and the lioness having slunk away with her cubs, and some of our dogs having attacked him, he turned right about and followed slowly after his mate, growling fearfully.

We feared that all this noise might have started the elephants: when, however, we had gained a commanding point on the shoulder of the hill, we could see a troop of very middling cow elephants with a number of calves of all sizes, and at about half a mile to the north another troop of cows. I wished to attack these, but the natives prevailed upon me to close with the nearest troop; and the dogs having separated a fine old cow, with long white tusks, from the herd, I galloped up, and, firing from the saddle, bowled her over with a single ball behind the shoulder.

On the 11th we held north-east, and halted on the Limpopo, and two first-rate bull elephants and one hippopotamus fell to my rifle this day. I fought one of the former in dense wait-a-bit jungle from half-past eleven till the sun was under, when his tough old spirit fled, and he fell pierced with fifty-seven balls. On the 17th I trekked about five miles, and next day rode down the river, and beheld one of the most wondrous and interesting sights that a sportsman could be blessed with.

On the sandy promontory of an island were about thirty sea-cows and calves, whilst in the pool opposite, and a little below them, stood about twenty more sea-cows with their heads and backs above water. About fifty yards farther down were eight or ten immense fellows, which I think were all bulls; and about one hundred yards below these in the middle of the stream stood another herd of about eight or ten cows with calves, and two huge bulls. The sea-cows lay close together like pigs, their favourite position being to rest their heads on their comrades' sterns and sides. These herds were attended by an immense number of rhinoceros birds, which, on observing me, did their best to spread alarm amongst the hippopotami. I was resolved to select, if possible, a first-rate old bull out of this vast concourse of animals, and delayed firing for nearly two hours, during which time I attentively studied *their heads* behind the thick thorny cover.

Having made my choice, I fired my first shot at a splendid bull, and sent the ball in a little behind the eye. He was at once disabled, and kept plunging and swimming round and round, wearing away down the pool, until I finished him with two more shots. The whole pool was now in a state of intense commotion, the best cows and bulls at once became very shy and cunning, showing only the flat roofs of their heads, and sometimes only their nostrils; the younger cows were not so timid and raised their heads; and if I had wished to make a bag I might have shot an immense number. This however was not my object, and as there was likely to be a difficulty in securing what I did kill, I determined only to fire at the very best; when, therefore, the sun went down I had only bagged five first-rate hippopotami, four cows and one bull; besides these there were three or four more very severely wounded which were spouting blood throughout the pool.

The next day I marched the two spans of oxen down to the edge of the river, and dragged out one of the sea-cows high and dry. During the day I killed two more, but they were very shy and cunning. I saw at least thirty basking in the sun.

On the 20th I again rode down the river to the pool, and bagged two very first-rate old sea-cows. I also discovered a most dangerous trap constructed by the Bakalahari for killing sea-cows. It consisted of a sharp little assagai or spike thoroughly poisoned, and stuck firmly into the end of a heavy block of thorn-wood about four feet long and five inches in diameter. This formidable affair was suspended over the centre of a sea-cow path at a height of about thirty feet from the ground by a bark cord which passed over a high branch of a tree, and thence to a peg on one side of the path beneath, leading across the path to a peg on the other side, where it was fastened. To the suspending cord were two triggers, so constructed that, when the sea-cow struck against the cord which led across the path, the heavy block above was set at liberty, which instantly dropped with immense force with its poisonous dart, inflicting a sure and mortal wound. The bones and old teeth of sea-cows which lay rotting along the bank of the river evinced the success of this dangerous inven-

tion. I remained in the neighbourhood of this pool for several days, during which time I bagged no fewer than fifteen first-rate hippopotami, the greater portion of them being bulls.

At dawn of day on the 28th we marched up the river to the drift; but after incredible exertions, and the loss of some of my traps, did not get my waggons across till the 29th.

I inspanned at dawn of day on the 30th. Seleka and his men and my hired Baquainas remained by me until I crossed the Limpopo, and then all turned home. I was now once more without natives, and held down the north-western bank, but Bakalahari soon joined us, and their numbers increased as we held on. I had the good luck this day to bag five more first-rate hippopotami.

The next day I killed seven; amongst them was a most splendid old cow, which carried tusks far superior to any we had yet seen.

From a continued run of good luck in all my hunting expeditions with my horses and oxen, I had become foolishly careless, and had got into a most dangerous habit of allowing them to feed about the waggons long after the sun was under. I was always boasting of my good luck, and used to say that the lions knew that the cattle belonged to me, and feared to molest them. This night, however, a bitter lesson was in store for me, for the horses were sought for in vain.

The next day the sun had been up two hours, but my horses could nowhere be found. I therefore ordered John Stofolus and Hendrick to take bridles and a supply of meat, and to follow up the spoor; and, being anxious to see which way it went, took a rifle and accompanied them. Observing vultures to the west, and hearing the voices of natives, I proceeded in that direction at top speed, and to my utter horror found the remains of my two most valuable and favourite veteran shooting-horses, "Black Jock" and "Schwartland," which had been fearfully mangled and half consumed by a troop of lions; the former was a first-rate young horse, worth 24*l.*, the latter aged, but by far my most valuable steed, and perhaps the best shooting-horse in Southern Africa—he knew no fear, and would approach as near as I chose to elephant or lion, or any description of game. From his back I had shot nearly all my

elephants last year; and so fond and careful was I of this horse, that I never mounted him until we had found elephants, when I used him in the fight, and then immediately off-saddled.

With a sickening heart I returned from this painful scene utterly dejected to camp, and in the afternoon, taking all my dogs, went in search of the lions, but failed to find them. A large party of the natives from the south-west, the Bamalette, reached me late in the day: their object was to obtain flesh, and to endeavour to persuade me to come and trade with them. They had fallen in with three of my steeds; the others were found by my men near the drift where I had last crossed the river. At sundown I constructed a very strong kraal for my cattle, and made all fast. Very soon after a troop of lions came up on the spoor of the horses, and fancying they could repeat the tragedy of last night, fought with my dogs in the most daring manner, off and on, until near daybreak, driving them in to the fireside. The cattle were very restive, and nearly broke away, but the kraal was good and saved them.

In the morning I rode down the river, followed by at least two hundred natives. When the waggons came up, I found myself minus another steed, a fine young mare, which had fallen into a Bakalahari pitfall and been suffocated.

On the 5th I fell in with a large herd of about thirty hippopotami, wounding seven or eight in the head, and killing two, a bull and a cow, both of which we found next day. At night the lions fought with our dogs until the morning, and came boldly in between the fires of the natives who lay around my camp.

The next day I rode ahead to the pool where I had last shot. When the waggons came up, I detected the head Bakalahari of the kraal beside which my mare had been killed talking with my cattle herds, with whom he seemed to be on very intimate terms. The death of my horse was either intentional or most culpably careless, as the pits were left covered, and the cattle driven to pasture in the middle of them; I accordingly deemed it proper that this man should be made an example of; so, calling to my English servant, Carey, to assist me, we each seized an arm of the guilty chief,

and I ordered Hendrick to flog him with a sea-cow jambok ; after which I admonished him, and told him that if the holes were not opened in future, I would make a more severe example as I proceeded. The consequence of this salutary admonition was, that all the pitfalls along the river were thrown open in advance of my march, a thing which I had never before seen among the Bechuana tribes. In the afternoon I rode down the river a few pools, and I wounded three or four hippopotami, and killed one ; we saw about thirty.



## CHAPTER XXV.

TREK DOWN THE LIMPOPO — A LION CARRIES OFF ONE OF MY MEN —  
“TSETSE” FLY — PAAPA FOUNTAIN — HUNTING LIONS WITH DOGS  
BY MOONLIGHT — A TROOP OF LIONS.

I RESOLVED now to cease hunting sea-cows for a time, and trek ahead in good earnest. I accordingly moved along the river until sundown, and was struck with astonishment at the number of the hippopotami, which seemed to increase the farther I trekked down the river; every pool had its herd; they were extremely fearless, and allowed me to approach within fifteen yards of them. In the morning I found myself minus my hired natives, who, fearing to receive a chastisement similar to that of the chief of the Bakalahari, thought it best to get out of the way. The chief Matsaca brought me ivory, which I obtained in barter for muskets and ammunition.

On the 8th we trekked at dawn, and after proceeding a few miles came upon the Lotsane, a gravelly-bedded river, with water only in occasional spots, such as are met with in the Bamangwato country. Here was much spoor of elephant; and the natives pressing me to halt and hunt, I outspanned; the next morning started with a party of natives, but returned without finding a single fresh spoor. Here I found my friends from Bamangwato, Mollyeon and Kapain, with a party. I was glad to see these men, as I knew they would assist me in my hunting, and could also converse with me.

On the 10th I rode down the river, and found sea-cows more and more abundant; the margin of the river also on each side was trampled down by elephants, rhinoceroses, buffaloes, &c. Having ridden about six miles, I found the fresh spoor of a troop of bull elephants, but, after following it for some hours, the natives lost it. A little distance ahead of us was a rocky hill, and from the summit I discovered an immense herd of

elephants, drinking in a wide open spot on a river which falls into the Limpopo, called by the natives Sukung.

We then made a turn to leeward, and came in upon this fine herd, the largest I had ever seen; there must have been upwards of one hundred elephants before my eye at once. The troop consisted chiefly of cows and calves; but I detected one fine well-grown bull, carrying very fair tusks—for we were not more than twenty yards from the outside cows; and though no trees intervened between us and them, they took not the slightest notice of us.

At length I gave the bull a shot in the shoulder, and then followed him up. He stumbled, and fell once upon the slippery granite rock, but recovering his feet, went off at a pace which I could scarcely keep on the dangerous ground. By good luck, most of my dogs came to my assistance, and I slew him in a few minutes with eight or ten shots.

On the following day I shot another bull elephant and a white rhinoceros; and on the afternoon of the 12th, returning to camp weary and worn, came unexpectedly upon a bull elephant of unusual size. He took refuge in an extensive jungle of impracticable wait-a-bits, where it was impossible to do anything on horseback; I was therefore obliged to hunt him on foot, and slew him with thirty bullets, after an extremely severe and dangerous combat of about two hours.

On the 14th, night set in warm, calm, and still, with a good moonlight. Elephants, sea-cows, and panthers kept up a continued music above and below us along the river.

On the 15th I felt very ill, but in the forenoon went down to the river, where I shot two sea-cows: in the evening, feeling worse, I bled myself, but strong fever was on me all night.

Next morning I marched, halting at sundown on the Moko-jay, a periodical river.

On the 18th, having taken leave of Mollyeon and Kapain of Bamangwato, who would not follow me farther, we inspanned, and held down the Limpopo. I regretted to observe that the spoor of elephants did not seem to increase as I had allowed myself to imagine: we were in an extremely remote and uninhabited district, yet the elephants, though frequenting it, were *decidedly* scarce. I felt extremely weak and nervous

from the fever and the quantity of blood I had lost, insomuch that I started at my own shadow, and several times sprang to one side when the leaves rustled in the bushes. Presently I came upon the fresh dung of bull elephants, and at the same moment my people at the waggons saw two old bull elephants within two hundred yards of them: the wind being favourable, they walked unsuspectingly away, and, mounting my horse, I secured them both. On beholding these elephants, my weakness (brought on by bleeding) and my nervousness immediately left me.

On the 20th, early in the morning, I rode some distance down the river, with one after-rider, to explore, and, following an elephant path in very rocky ground, came suddenly within ten yards of an old bull buffalo, which instantly charged, and, had not my horse been particularly active, I could not have escaped him: so headlong was his charge that he lost his footing in the rocky ground, and fell with amazing violence, getting up and retreating quite crippled with the fall.

My fever still continuing, and the natives having deserted, I determined upon turning my face homewards, and on the 21st ordered my men to inspan and retrace their spoor. A troop of lions which had killed some game near our encampment gave us a parting salute. Their voices sounded to me ominous, perhaps from the nervous state I was in. I thought they said, "Yes, you do well to retrace your rash steps; you have just come far enough." I must acknowledge that I felt a little anxious as to the safety of proceeding farther on several accounts. First, the natives had spoken of Moselekatse, who now resided not very far off, as one who would most unquestionably murder me and seize my property. They also told me that I should lose my cattle by the fly called "Tsetse;" and there was also reason to believe that the country in advance was not very healthy for man.

My followers received my orders to turn homewards with sincere gratification: we trekked till sundown, and slept on the Mokojay, where the Bamangwato men had left me.

On the 29th we arrived at a small village of Bakalahari, who told me that elephants were abundant on the opposite side of the river. I accordingly drew my waggons up on the

river's bank, within thirty yards of the water and about one hundred from the native village; and, having outspanned, we at once set about making a kraal of the worst description of thorn-trees. This I was very careful about doing, since my severe loss by lions on the first of the month, and my cattle were thus secured by a strong kraal, which enclosed my two waggons, the horses being made fast to a trektow stretched between the hind-wheels of the waggons. I had yet, however, a fearful lesson to learn as to the habits of the lion, of which I at one time entertained so little fear; and on this night a horrible tragedy was acted in my little lonely camp of so very awful and appalling a nature as to make the blood curdle in our veins. I worked till near sundown with Hendrick, my first waggon-driver—I cutting down the trees and he dragging them to the kraal: and, when that for the cattle was finished, turned my attention to making a pot of barley-broth, and lighted a fire between the waggons and the water, close to the river's bank, under a dense grove of shady trees, making no sort of kraal around our sitting-place for the evening.

The Hottentots, according to their usual custom, being satisfied with the shelter of a large dense bush, made their fire about fifty yards from mine. The evening passed away cheerfully. Elephants were heard soon after dark breaking the trees in the forest across the river, and once or twice I strode away into the darkness some distance from the fireside to listen to them. I little, at that moment, imagined the imminent peril to which I was exposing my life, or thought that a bloodthirsty man-eater lion was near, and only watching his opportunity to spring into the midst of us, and consign one of our number to a most horrible death. About three hours after sundown I called my men to come and take their coffee; and after supper, three of them—John Stofolus, Hendrick, and Ruyter—returned before their comrades to their own fireside, and lay down. Hendrick and Ruyter lay on one side of the fire under one blanket, and John Stofolus on the other. At this moment I was eating some barley-broth at my fire, which was small, for, owing to our proximity to the village, wood was very scarce. The night was pitch dark and windy.

• Suddenly the appalling and savage roar of an angry lion

burst upon my ear within a few yards of us, followed by the shrieking of the Hottentots; again and again the murderous roar of attack was repeated. We heard John and Ruyter shriek; still, for a few moments, we thought the lion was only chasing one of the dogs round the kraal; but, next instant, Stofolus rushed into the midst of us almost speechless with fear and terror, his eyes bursting from their sockets, and shrieked out, "The lion! the lion! He has got Hendrick; he dragged him away from the fire beside me; I struck him with the burning brands upon his head, but he would not let go his hold. Hendrick is dead! Oh, God! Hendrick is dead! Let us take fire and seek him." On hearing this the rest of my people rushed about, shrieking and yelling as if they were mad, which made me angry with them for their folly, and I told them that if they did not keep quiet, the lion would in all probability have another of us, and that very likely there was a troop of them. I then ordered the dogs to be let loose, and the fire increased as far as it could be. I likewise shouted Hendrick's name, but all was still, and, hunting my dogs forward, had everything brought within the cattle-kraal, and closed the entrance as well as we could. To help the dead man was impossible.

My terrified people sat round the fire with guns in their hands all night, fancying every moment that the lion would return and spring again into the midst of us. When the dogs were first let go, the stupid brutes, as dogs often prove when most required, instead of going at the lion, rushed fiercely on one another, and fought desperately for some minutes; after this they got his wind, and, going at him, showed us his position, and here they kept up a continued barking until day dawned, the lion occasionally springing after them and driving them in upon the kraal. The horrible monster had dragged the unfortunate man into a little hollow at the back of the thick bush, beside which the fire was kindled, and here within forty yards of us he devoured him, careless of our proximity.

It appeared that when the wretched Hendrick had risen to drive in an ox, the lion had watched him to his fireside, and he had scarcely lain down when the brute sprang upon him





THE FATE OF POOR HENDRICK

and Ruyter, and, roaring, grappled him with his fearful claws, biting him on the breast and shoulder, all the while feeling for his neck; having got hold of which, he at once dragged him away backwards round the bush into the dense shade.

As the animal lay upon the unfortunate man, he faintly cried "Help me, help me! Oh, God! men, help me!" after which all was still, except that his comrades heard the bones of his neck cracking between the teeth of the lion. John Stofolus was lying with his back to the fire on the opposite side, and hearing the lion, sprang up, and, seizing a large flaming brand, belaboured him on the head with the burning wood, but the brute did not take any notice of him. The Bushman had a narrow escape, and did not get off altogether scatheless, the lion having inflicted two gashes on him with his claws.

As the day broke, we heard the lion dragging something up the river-side under cover of the bank, and, having driven the cattle out of the kraal, proceeded to inspect the scene of the night's awful tragedy. In the hollow, where the beast had consumed his prey, we found one leg of the unfortunate Hendrick, bitten off below the knee, the shoe still on his foot; the grass and bushes were all stained with blood, and fragments of his pea-coat lay around. Poor Hendrick! I knew that old coat, and had often seen some of its shreds in the dense covers where the elephants had charged after my unfortunate after-rider. Hendrick was by far the best man I had. He was of a most cheerful disposition, a first-rate waggon-driver, fearless in the field, very active, willing, and obliging, and his loss to us all was very serious. I felt sick at heart, and could not remain at the waggons, so I resolved to go after elephants to divert my mind. I had heard them breaking the trees on the opposite side of the river that morning, and, having ordered my people to devote the day to fortifying the kraal, started with Piet and Ruyter as my after-riders. Crossing the river, we at once took up the fresh spoor of a troop of bull elephants, but they unfortunately joined a troop of cows, and when we came up, the dogs attacked the cows, and the bulls were off in a moment, before we could even see them. One remarkably fine old cow charged the dogs, and I finished her with two shots from the saddle.



Being anxious to return to my people before night, I did not attempt to follow the troop, and my followers were not a little gratified to see me, for terror had taken hold of their minds, and they expected that, emboldened by the success of the preceding night, the lion would prove still more daring in his attack, but fate had ordained otherwise. It was still two hours to sunset, and feeling refreshed by a little rest, and capable of further work, I ordered the steeds to be saddled, and went in search of the man-eater.

John and Carey, armed, accompanied me as after-riders, and a party of natives followed with the dogs. The lion had dragged the remains of poor Hendrick along a native footpath that led up the river-side; we found fragments of his coat all along the spoor, and at last the mangled coat itself. About six hundred yards from our camp the dry bed of a stream joined the Limpopo, and at this spot there was much shade, cover, and heaps of dry reeds and trees deposited by the river in some great flood. The lion had left the footpath and entered this secluded spot, and, feeling convinced that we were upon him, I ordered the natives to let the dogs go, when they walked suspiciously forward on the spoor, and next minute began to spring about, barking angrily, with all their hair bristling on their backs; a crash upon the dry reeds immediately followed—it was the lion bounding away.

Several of the dogs, extremely afraid of him, kept rushing continually backwards and springing aloft to obtain a view; but I now pressed forward and urged them on, and old Argyll and Bles took up his spoor in gallant style, and led on the others. Then commenced a short but lively and glorious chase, the conclusion of which was the only satisfaction I could obtain for the horrors of the preceding evening. The lion held up the river's bank for a short distance, and took away through some wait-a-bit thorn cover, the best he could find, but nevertheless open; here, in two minutes, the dogs were up with him, and he turned and stood at bay. As I approached, his horrid head was to me, his jaws open, and growling fiercely, and his tail waving from side to side.

On beholding the brute my blood boiled with rage, and, setting my teeth, I dashed my steed forward within thirty

yards of him, and shouting "*Your time is up, old fellow,*" placed my rifle to my shoulder, and waited for a broadside. This the next moment he exposed, when I sent a bullet through his shoulder and dropped him on the spot; he again rose, but I finished him with a second in the breast. The natives now came up in wonder and delight, and ordering John to cut off his head and forepaws and bring them to the waggons, I mounted my horse and galloped home, having been absent about fifteen minutes. When the Bakalahari women heard that the man-eater was dead, they danced for joy, calling me their "*father*."

On the 6th of September, there being no flesh in camp, I galloped up the river-side to slay a hippopotamus, and presently heard a troop of them chanting behind me, for I had ridden past and not observed them. With these I was unlucky; for, though I wounded six or seven, I did not bag one. At midday I galloped to a favourite sea-cow pool about a mile below my waggons, and I found a herd of at least thirty hippopotami lying upon the rocks in the middle of the river. I shot the best bull and two fine old cows. The bull and the two cows soon floated, and I was occupied most of the next day in reducing the same to biltongue, which we hung in garlands upon ox-rheims stretched between the trees. In the evening a large party of Seleka's Bechuanas arrived at my camp.

On the 8th, one of my steeds died of horse-sickness, and on reaching camp I learned that "*Lion*," my very best dog, had been eaten by a huge crocodile, who frequented the spot where we drew water: to these little pleasing varieties the African hunter must make up his mind, they are every-day occurrences.

I saddled up at an early hour, and went in quest of elephants with Seleka's men. We crossed the Limpopo and then held east through the forest for the strong fountain called Seboono, but here I was unlucky. When under the mountains I met with the famous fly called "*tsetse*," the bite of which is certain death to oxen and horses. This "*hunter's scourge*" is like the kleg in Scotland, though a little smaller. The tsetses are very quick and active, and storm a horse like

a swarm of bees, alighting on him in hundreds and drinking his blood. The animal thus bitten pines away and dies at periods varying from a week to three months, according to the extent to which he has suffered.

On the 10th the chief Pocoolway, a short stout man, of a prepossessing expression, arrived with a large retinue.

After three or four days of unsuccessful hunting, I resolved, on the 14th, there being good moonlight, to try what might be done with the elephants by night-shooting at the fountains, and determined to make Carey shoot with me, he using the big rifle of six to the pound, and I my single-barrelled two-grooved of eight to the pound. Crossing the Limpopo, I rode forward alone to explore, and suddenly came upon two magnificent bull elephants, but I had neither dogs nor guns; nevertheless I was determined to keep one in sight, though upon a jaded steed.

It were long to describe all the turns and twists I had with this princely old bull, and the charges he made. I certainly did my duty, and stuck by him like a good old deer-hound by his stag, and did this day that which no two of my men had ever accomplished for me. At length I became so exhausted, and my horse was so completely done up, that I felt that matters were drawing to a close, and that I could not hold him much longer. Help was, however, at hand. Carey and Mutchuisho, with a large party of the natives, were at this moment carefully following up the spoor of my horse, and my hoarse voice fell on Carey's ear, when he instantly called silence among the natives and sat listening in his saddle. A second time my halloo was heard, and "Cooley" and "Affriar," two good dogs, were instantly released from the couples and flew to my assistance—right glad was I when I saw black Cooley come up to help me. In two minutes more Carey handed me his single-barrel smooth-bore twelve to the pound, when I opened my fire on the elephant from the saddle, and put my seventh bullet through his heart: on receiving this, he made a short charge and stood trembling for a few seconds, when he fell forward on his breast and expired. The tusks of this elephant equalled my expectations; one of them, as usual, was more perfect than its fellow;

I had never seen their match but once, and lay down to rest that night the happiest of the happy.

The 15th was an extremely hot day. Late in the night a troop of eight or ten bull elephants walked slowly across the vley. I rushed forward to get before them in the wind, and reached to within thirty yards of the last bull, the best in the troop. Observing me move, he stood with his tusks up and his head towards me in a very suspicious manner for two minutes, when his fears died away, and he turned his left side: I then gave him a deadly shot, which brought blood from his trunk, as I ascertained next day. Returning I met Carey, whose pluck had failed him, and he had dropped behind; on upbraiding him for not standing by me, he swore stoutly that he had stuck in a bog, running for the shot. I thought this was good, and said to myself, "I have got a nickname for you at last." But Carey was a good servant, and very attentive to me throughout my expedition.

The next night I and Mutchuisho watched the fountain, and we had not been long there before three enormous old bull elephants made their appearance. One of them came within six or eight yards of me, when I gave him a shot from the big two-grooved rifle, and he dashed off with his two comrades in immense consternation, holding for the Limpopo.

The next day one of my steeds died of tsetse. He had been bitten under the mountain-range lying to the south of this fountain. The head and body of the poor animal swelled up in a most distressing manner before he died; his eyes were so swollen that he could not see, and blind, he neighed for his comrades who stood feeding beside him.

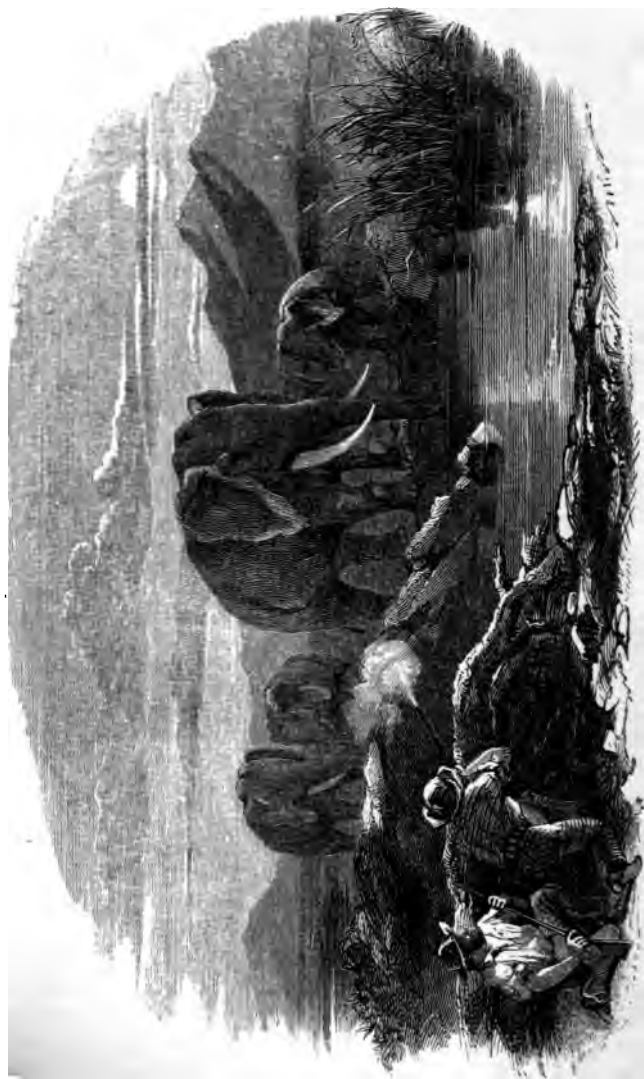
On the 17th of September I resolved to leave Seboono and proceed with a few Bakalahari to a small yet famous water about six miles to the south-east, called by the natives "Paa-paa." Here I found the numerous footpaths leading to it covered, as I had anticipated, with fresh spoor of elephant and rhinoceros, and I therefore proceeded to study the best spot on which to make our shooting-hole for the night. It would be impossible to prevent some of the game from getting our wind, for the paths led to it from every side, but the prevailing wind was from the east, so I pitched upon the south-

west corner of the fountain, which was not more than twenty yards long and ten yards broad. The west side was bounded by massive rock which rose abruptly about five feet high; the top of this rock was level with the surrounding vley, and here all the elephants drank, as if suspicious of treading on the muddy margin on the other three sides of the fountain. Our shooting-box was within six or eight yards from it, and constructed in a circle of bushes packed together so as to form a hedge about three feet high: on the top were placed heavy dead oak branches of trees, as a clear rest for our rifles, all lashed firmly together with strips of thorn bark. The day was particularly favourable for bringing game to the water, the sun being extremely powerful, and a hot dry wind prevailing all the afternoon: I told Carey that we were certain of having a good night's sport, and I was right, for we undoubtedly had about the finest and most wonderful that was ever enjoyed by man.

A stately bull giraffe, two jackals, Guinea-fowl, partridges, two or three sorts of pigeon and turtle-dove, and small birds in countless numbers, were pouring in to drink from every aim, as we walked up to our hiding-place and lay down. In a few minutes the sun was under: but the moon was strong and high (it being within three nights of the full), and the sky was clear, with scarcely a cloud. Very soon a step was heard approaching from the east: it was a presuming black rhinoceros, which came up within ten yards of the hiding-hole, and, observing us with his sharp prying eye, at once came slowly forward for a nearer inspection. I sprang up and waved my large kaross, shouting at the same time; but this only seemed to amuse Borèlé, for he stood within four yards of us, with his horn threatening our destruction, nor would he wheel about until I threw a log of wood at him. Black rhinoceroses are very difficult to scare when they do not get the wind; the best way is to throw a stone at them—that is, in the event of the sportsman not wishing to discharge his gun.

Soon after Borèlé departed, four old bull elephants drew near from the south with a slow and stately step, until within twenty yards of us, when the leading elephant took it into his head to pass to leeward, and got our wind; he was now





ELEPHANT SHOOTING BY MOONLIGHT.

within ten yards of the muzzles of our heavy-metalled rifles, and on winding us tossed his trunk aloft, when we instantly fired together. I caught him somewhere about the heart, but my big six-pound rifle burst in Carey's hands, very nearly killing us both, and the elephant wheeled about, and retreated to the forest at top speed.

We again laid down in our hole, and had not watched long before three princely bull elephants appeared exactly where the first came on, and holding exactly the same course, when we fired together and sent our bullets somewhere about the leading elephant's heart. He ran two hundred yards, and uttering the cry of death, fell heavily to the earth. One of his comrades, a grand old bull, almost immediately slowly and warily advanced, and it was interesting to observe him approach the fountain; he seemed to mistrust the very earth on which he stood, and smelt and examined with his trunk every yard of the ground before he trod on it, sometimes standing five minutes on one spot without moving. At length, having gone round three sides of the fountain, and being apparently satisfied as to the correctness of everything, he stepped boldly on to the rock on the west, and, walking up within six or seven yards of the muzzles of our rifles, turned his broadside, and, lowering his trunk, drew up a volume of water, which he threw over his back and shoulders to cool his person. This operation was repeated two or three times, after which he commenced drinking, drawing the water into his trunk and then pouring it into his mouth. I determined to break his leg if possible, so, covering the limb about level with the lower line of his body, I fired, Carey firing for his heart. I made a lucky shot; for, as the elephant turned and attempted to make away, his leg broke with a loud crack. Disabled and utterly incapable of escaping, he stood statue-like beside the fountain, and made only an occasional attempt at locomotion.

The patch of my rifle fired at this elephant's comrade ignited a large ball of dry old dung, about eight yards to leeward of our kraal, and, fanned by the breeze, was now burning away very brightly, the sparks flying in the wind. Presently two bull elephants were seen approaching by the



selfsame footpath which the others had held ; the first a half-grown bull, the last an out-and-out old fellow with enormous tusks. They came on as the first had done, but seemed inclined to pass to windward of us ; the young bull however observing the fire, at once walked up to it, and smelling at it with his trunk seemed extremely amused, and in a gambolling humour threw his trunk about, as if not knowing what to think of it. The larger one now came up, and exposed a fine broadside : we took him behind the shoulder and fired together ; he wheeled about and held away with drooping ears, evidently mortally wounded. After this we fired at six more enormous bull elephants, which went away hard hit. One of them on receiving the shots dropped a volume of water from his trunk, and, tossing it aloft, uttered a loud cry, and made off.

When the sun rose I proceeded with the Bakalahari to inspect the spoors of the wounded elephants ; and when I thought over our night's sport I was struck with astonishment : nine times had first-rate old bull elephants come up to drink, and we had fired at eight of these at distances of from six to ten yards, with cool steady rests. Two of them lay dead beside the fountain ; another had a broken leg, and could not get away, and the only one which we imagined had escaped was the bull with the wide set tusks. The event, however, proved that our expectations were incorrect, for that afternoon we found this princely elephant lying dead very near our kraal ; both our shots were very far back, wounding him somewhere about the kidneys. We never saw anything of the four other elephants shot by us. The bull with the broken leg had gone nearly a mile from the fountain when we came up to him ; at first he made vain attempts to escape, and then to charge, but finding he could neither escape nor catch any of us, he stood at bay beside a tree, and my after-riders began to assail him. It was curious to watch his movements as the boys, at about twenty yards distance, pelted him with sticks, &c. Each thing after it was thrown he took up and hurled back at them. When, however, dry balls of elephants' dung were pitched at him he contented *himself* with smelling at them with his trunk. At length I

gave him four shots behind the shoulder, when his gigantic form quivered, and, falling over, he expired. At night we again watched the fountain, but only one elephant appeared; I, however, shot two fine old muchocho, or white rhinoceroses, and wounded two or three borelé.

On the night of the 19th I and Carey shot one fine bull elephant and four rhinoceroses, wounding two others, which escaped. On the night following we also wounded two elephants, which got away. The next night we did nothing.

I had long entertained an idea that elephants might be hunted in the saddle by moonlight with dogs, as in the day; but I thought it very probable that a man might get his eyes torn out by the wait-a-bits; I had also a notion that the elephants might prove more active, and perhaps more vicious. This night, however, I resolved to put the question to trial, and leading my dogs through the forest to leeward of where a bull who had come to the fountain to drink had gone in, slipped them at him. They dashed forward, and next minute was heard the baying of the dogs and the crash and the trumpet of the elephant, as they held right away for the mountains to the south-west. When, however, the elephant found that his speed did not avail, and that he could not get away from his pursuers, he began to turn and dodge about in the thickest of the cover, occasionally making charges at the dogs. I followed on as best I could, shouting with all my might to encourage my good hounds, and these, hearing their master's voice, stuck well to their game, and fought him better than in the day. I gave him my first two shots from the saddle; after which I rode close up to him, and, running in on foot, gave him some deadly shots at distances of from fifteen to twenty yards, being partly concealed by the red dust which he caught up with his trunk and blew in clouds about him. At length he came down with tremendous violence on his vast stern, pitching his head and trunk aloft to a prodigious height, and, falling heavily over on his side, expired. I bowled over another fine bull elephant the same night with four shots, and also wounded an old black rhinoceros.

The next morning, my ammunition being expended, or very nearly so, I despatched Carey to camp for fresh supplies, and

when he was gone walked through the forest around the fountain to seek for my wounded game. I first came upon the black rhinoceros of last night, and a little farther on observed my dog Frachum sniff up the wind and go ahead, returning with two jackals trotting behind him, so I at once knew that there was some game lying dead in advance. When I had proceeded a little farther the dogs ran forward, and next moment a rush of many feet was heard charging towards where I stood; it was a troop of half-grown lions, with a lioness, which dashed past me followed by the dogs. They had been feasting on a white rhinoceros I had wounded two nights previously, now lying a little ahead. Beside the carcass stood a fine fat calf—the poor thing, no doubt, fancying that its mother slept, had, heedless of lions and the other wild animals that had feasted there, remained beside its dead mother for a day and two nights. Rhinoceros calves always stick to their mothers long after they are dead. The next night I was again successful in a night hunt, and bagged a very fine bull elephant.

While reviewing my extraordinary good fortune during the last week's hunting, I could not help regretting that I had not thought of pursuing the elephants at night with dogs and horses before: if I had commenced only a week sooner, I might have bagged eight or ten first rate bulls, which I knew were mortally wounded, but were, nevertheless, not forthcoming. The ivory of these elephants would have brought me in upwards of 200*l.*; and it was vexing to think that many, if not all of them, were lying rotting in the surrounding forest. My only chance of finding them was by watching the vultures; but these birds, knowing that they cannot break the skin of the larger game, preferred remaining near the He elmanan, where the butchering was going briskly forward.

While, however, I mourned the loss of these wounded elephants, I reckoned that I had been favoured with immense good fortune in many instances during the past week. Ever intent upon increasing my princely collection of African hunting trophies, I placed great value upon any specimen I happened to shoot which I thought worthy of adorning it. Thus I neglected my real interest, and, instead of devoting my

attention to rendering my expedition profitable, I allowed this very necessary part of the business to remain quite a secondary consideration. Thus, when I shot an ordinary bull elephant, I was accustomed to say to myself, "Ah! a good bull, tusks at least fifty pounds each, 4s. 6d. a pound; being me in 22*l.* 10*s.* Capital day's work, help to pay for the two horses that died last week, or the four that are bitten with tsetse, and must die in a week or two." But if, on the other hand, I shot an elephant with a pair of tusks of unusual size or beauty, I at once devoted them to my collection, and valued them at a tenfold price. This, then, was one thing in which I reckoned I had been extremely fortunate. I had secured the finest tusks in all those herds of patriarchal old bulls which I had so sadly cut up in one short week, and which perhaps the summers of a century had seen roaming through those boundless forests.

The night shooting being at an end, on the 23rd I retraced my steps to the dead elephants, to assist Carey in superintending the cutting out of the ivory, and in escorting the same along with our supply of fat and flesh to the waggons. Early in the afternoon we had got all ready for a start. The Bechuana captains who had appropriated my elephants and rhinoceroses, and nearly all the fat, with about fifty men, shouldered my impedimenta, and we marched for camp. Carey went in front, I rode in the middle, and my after riders brought up the rear. This long line of naked savages threading the mazes of the forest, and beating home the spoils of a few days' hunting, formed a truly interesting and unusual picture. Every man that was there carried something of mine: some led the dogs, some carried the guns and extra ammunition, some cooking vessels, axes, stiches, water calabashes, provisions, rhinoceros' horns, elephants' teeth, and an immense supply of flesh and fat, &c. &c. We made the Idupopos as the sun went down, crossed all right, and brought everything safe to camp. I made other excursions from this encampment in quest of elephants, in which I was very unsuccessful, but as they did not differ in their details from the many already described, I shall not run the risk of wearying *my reader with an account of them.*

On the 30th one of those minor accidents occurred which the hunter in these parts must be prepared continually to encounter. As I awoke that morning I heard a scream which denoted that Prince, a most worthless dog, was consumed by a crocodile. They seemed ever to be on the look-out for prey, and I have not the slightest doubt they would have taken one of us if we had ventured in.

On the 3rd of October I made for the fountain called Setoque, accompanied by Kapain and a party from Bamangwato, and shot an old bull elephant.

On the 5th, as the rainy season was over, I began to think of hunting no more across the Limpopo; and any day I might find myself out off from camp by a mighty stream, which would probably remain impassable for months. I also wished, if possible, to save one or two of my horses from the "tsetse," for my stud was now reduced to five. I therefore resolved to return at once to camp.

On my way I visited the remains of the carcass of an enormous old bull, which I had shot on the night of the 16th of last month, for I had followed his spoor to within half a mile of the spot. His tusks had not been cut out, but drawn, and stolen as reported; the skull remained perfect, and was finely cleaned by hyenas, vultures, and insects. I suspected that a tribe of Bakalahari who lived not far from the elephant, upon the river, knew all about the tusks, for there were no other natives in that district; so I resolved to ride to the village early next morning, and threaten to shoot the chief if the teeth did not quickly appear.

Accordingly, on the 6th, before it was clear, four steeds were saddled; and having taken coffee, I crossed the Limpopo, accompanied by Carey, John, and Piet, bearing double-barrelled guns, and held down the river-side for the Bakalahari village, which we made in about an hour. As soon as I observed the huts, I dashed across their corn-lands at a racing pace, and was standing in the middle of the natives before they were aware of my approach.

The chief whom I wanted was in the forum with most of his men, so, dismounting from my horse, I walked up to them and sat down on the ground according to native custom, and,

taking snuff myself, handed it round. While I was doing this, John and Carey, armed, occupied the two places of exit from the forum. I sat silent for a little, and then said, "My heart is very bitter with the chief of this village. You were hungry, and I killed much flesh and fat for you; I told you that many of my elephants were lying dead, and that I wanted their teeth. You promised me to watch the vultures, and bring me the teeth. I have traced your spoor home from one of these elephants. Why did the tusks not come to my waggons? I do not want to shed your blood, but I require the teeth to be laid immediately before me."

They all immediately exclaimed, "The teeth are forthcoming, they are forthcoming: wait a little, chief of the white men. We saw the vultures, and hid the teeth for you." I was delighted to hear this, but I pretended still to be very angry, and answered, "My heart is still very bitter, for you should have brought the teeth at once to me, and not caused me to come with guns to seek my teeth." The chief at once despatched five or six active men to bring the teeth; Bechuma beer and porridge were then placed before me; and in an hour the natives returned, bearing the tusks of my lost elephant. I was right glad to see them; they were immense teeth, very finely arched, and almost perfect. The Bakalahari had drawn the tusks, and concealed them somewhere close to the carcass of the elephant; here they would most probably have lain concealed until I had left the country, when they would have forwarded them to their chief. In the afternoon we packed the ivory, which had hitherto lain loose in the kraal, in the baggage-waggon. There were fifty-three tusks of bull, and seventeen of cow elephants.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

THE LIMPOPO—THE GUAPA MOUNTAINS—SABLE ANTELOPE—PALLAS  
AND WILD DOGS—A SECRETARY—CROSS THE VAAL RIVER.

On the morning of the 8th of October we packed the waggons, and left the Bakalahari village, where we had camped for nearly six weeks. The old chief of these people looked extremely downhearted when he saw us preparing to depart, and could hardly refrain from crying. When I came there I had found them starving, but ever since my arrival they had had more good flesh and fat than they could eat; I had also employed the women to tread out my barley and Bechuana corn, and had always liberally rewarded them with beads, with which they adorned their persons. The old chief was distinguished by a snake-skin which he wore round his head; I gave him some presents at parting, and we then trekked, holding up the river, but at a considerable distance from it, the Limpopo having at this part a very considerable bend. In the evening we came again upon the river, and halted at our old kraal. On the march, Argyll, my best dog, and who had weathered my two campaigns in the Bamangwato country, was strangled on the trap of the waggon, where he was coupled with the other dogs. I now resolved to leave the Limpopo, and explore if possible the country in a north-westerly direction; but a large body of Sicomy's men who accompanied me, would not give any information either as to water or elephants, excepting in the course which suited themselves, invariably answering my questions with "There is no water in that direction; there are no elephants there." Thus I was left entirely in the dark how to proceed, and obliged to use my own discretion, the rascally Bechuanas swearing that we should not find water till sundown next day. The country through which we passed was very soft and sandy, the forest often so dense as to compel us to halt

and use our axes, and in the evening we halted at a small vley which I found by following an elephant footpath.

On the 13th we reached a strong succession of fountains, forming a running stream of pure water, and here the country became extremely beautiful; a very wide and finely wooded valley stretching away into the bosom of the mountains, and ending in a bold ravine. This district was the abode of a considerable tribe called Moroking; and their cultivated cornlands stretched away on every side of the fountain. Here I outspanned, and presently the chief and his people came to me highly pleased that I had visited them; they were dependents of Sicomy, and, for some reason which I could not discover, had been instructed by the Bamangwato natives not to give me any information regarding the elephants or the waters in advance. At night we were visited by a terrible and long-protracted thunderstorm, and much rain fell.

The next morning I shot a large wild goose, a splendid bird, its general colour dark glossy green, with white patches on its sides and beneath its wings, and while seeking for wild fowl along the edge of the stream I almost trod upon the tail of a terrible cobra, which Ruyter and I put an end to with sticks and stones. As the natives still persisted in saying that there were no elephants in advance, and the country, owing to the rain, was now quite unfit for trekking, I resolved to turn back, and we halted for the night at the fountain we had left on the preceding day. On the march I shot an extremely beautiful wood-pigeon; its back and tail were grass-green, its thighs bright orange, its bill and feet bright coral red.

On the 15th we inspanned, and held for the mountain of Guapa, where I had seen sable antelope on the 16th of July.

Next day we held for a vley close under the blue mountain in advance, and fell in with ostriches, springboks, zebras, blue gnooks, giraffes, wild boar; and, soon after, to my surprise, an old bull kookama or oryx, carrying a superb pair of horns: to the latter I gave chase, but lost him.

The vley to which I had been trusting proved dry. We outspanned here for an hour, however, and then held round the *western extremity* of this fine mountain-range; halting ~~on~~



the sun went down at a strong fountain. On the march I wounded a black rhinoceros, but did not bag him, and stalked a second black rhinoceros, which on receiving two deadly shots charged madly forward and subsided in the dust.

On the 17th held north-east, close in under the mountain-range, to look for elephants, and fell in with immense numbers of zebras and buffaloes numbering between three and five hundred in each herd, and towards evening with a large troop of elephants, when I killed one of the finest after an easy chase.

Here I also met with the beautiful sable antelope, and, after several unsuccessful attempts, at length obtained the success my perseverance deserved. Returning in the afternoon of the 20th homewards, I suddenly observed a herd of about ten of them in open cover on the mountain's ridge, two of which, after a severe and difficult stalk, I laid low, over a mass of sharp adamantine fragments of rock. I was highly gratified with my success, and now considered my collection of African trophies as almost perfect. I still wanted heads of the bluebuck, or kleeibok, Vaal rheebok, ourebi, and reitbok; but these were abundant in the colony, and were not difficult to get.

The 23rd was a very cool and cloudy morning, and looked likely for light rain. At an early hour I left my waggons with some provisions, and ascended the mountain side to seek for sable antelope. Soon after gaining the upper heights, I had the satisfaction to detect a fine herd of them feeding among the trees on the table summit of a ridge which stretched away to the east, and after a determined stalk in true Highland fashion, approaching the herd upon my belly, I fired at a big black buck as he dashed past me at top speed; the ball told loudly, and the buck bent up his back to the shot; but after a long and arduous chase with the dogs, I to my great disgust lost him.

On the 26th I resolved to make an expedition on foot across the mountain, and hunt in its northern limits for a few days. I accordingly started with Ruyter and four Bechuanas, bearing my bedding, pots, water, and other impedimenta, and when the sun went down halted beneath a green tree, where *I slept.*

I made my coffee by moonlight, and when the day dawned stalked along the upper ridges of the mountain, killing a koodoo out of a small troop for food. Immediately below the spot was a lonely kraal, and, when the Bakalahari heard the report of my rifle echoing through their valley, they left their pots upon their fires, and fled to a man. My Bechuanas, however, eventually induced them to come back again, and cut up my koodoo, after which they carried the flesh to a shady tree on the summit of this tabular range. These men had chosen for their place of residence a most romantic ravine which parted the mountain for a distance of about a mile, forming a deep and almost impassable gulf; at the upper end of it was a most delicious fountain, forming a strong running stream, which wound along the shady depths of this wild and most secluded spot.

I selected it to be my forest home for a short time; and here I spent some merry days, feasting like a prince on fat venison, marrow-bones, Bechuana corn, and beer, tea, coffee, and biscuit, &c. I was also provided with a rich dessert, consisting of a delicious African fruit called moopooroo, which was now ripe and extremely abundant throughout this range. The tree has a very dark green leaf; the fruit is about the size and shape of a large olive, and when ripe of a bright orange colour.

At earliest dawn next day I held down wind with Ruyter, and found the fresh spoor of a herd of sable antelope, and presently saw them among the trees within three hundred yards of us, some lying and some standing. One of the old does soon observed us as we sat in the grass; however, I crept away back, and made a very fine stalk upon the herd in very difficult ground, having been obliged to do a hundred and fifty yards of it on my breast. A wary old doe kept sentry, and prevented my approaching within a hundred yards. I therefore shot her with a bullet in the shoulder, and at once despatched the head to camp to be stuffed.

In the evening I fell in again with this same troop of potaquines on the northern range of the mountain; but they heard me coming on before I was aware of them, and held up wind over very rocky ground and through thick cover. I

the birds were feeding quietly up wind from me. I did not see the real pleasure to behold a number of white and grey feeding quietly up wind from me. It consisted of seven ducks of which I saw a magnificent bill back, and even at the time I was watching them were I could plainly see that he was a most expert swimmer. His horse seemed almost too large for him and every back over his shoulders with a determined and perfect grace.

I was at once with their movements, and gazed upon them with intense delight. The ground on which they were feeding being level, I thought the best way to stalk them would be to get in before them or windward, taking care of course to keep out of their way sufficiently far to ensure their not getting my mind. The day came freshly on, and inclined their course to the spot where I lay flat on my belly awaiting their first movement until one of them was within range of my rifle. When, however, they had come thus far, they seemed all at once to change their minds, and after feeding about for a few minutes they took another tack and altered their course from east to north. Seeing that it was impossible to do anything with them until I should get them into more uneven ground, I beat a retreat, and returned to the ridge where I had at first made them out. Here I again sat, and with a longing heart watched the movements of these loveliest

early course  
in rapid  
able and  
the

Having per-  
and looking over a height  
of well-wooded undulating  
I did not see the real pleasure to behold a  
of white and grey feeding quietly up wind  
from me. It consisted of seven ducks  
of which I saw a magnificent bill back, and even at the  
time I was watching them were I could plainly see that he  
was a most expert swimmer. His horse seemed almost too  
large for him and every back over his shoulders with a de-  
termined and perfect grace.

of Afric's lovely antelopes. I was struck with admiration at the magnificence of the noble old black buck, and vowed in my heart to slay him, although I should follow him for a twelvemonth. The old fellow seemed very fidgety in his movements, and while the does fed steadily on he lagged far behind, occasionally taking a mouthful of grass, and then standing for a few minutes under the trees, rubbing his huge, knotted, scimitar-shaped horns upon their branches. At length the does had fed away a hundred and fifty yards from him, and he still lagged behind. This was the golden moment to make a rapid stalk in upon him, while his ever-watchful sentinels were absent. I saw my chance, and, stealing rapidly down the rocky hill-side, gained the level on which the herd were pasturing; he was now obscured from my view by the bushy dwarfish trees which adorned the ground, and the next move was to get my eye upon him before he should observe me. Advancing stealthily, I saw that he was still feeding very slowly on after the does, apparently quite unsuspecting. I then cast off my shoes and shooting-belt, and, watching the lowering of his noble horns, my eye fixed tiger-like upon him, stalked rapidly in; my heart beat and throbbed with anxiety as I advanced, and now stood almost within shot of him. Twenty yards nearer and I could fire; again he lowered his head to crop the young grass, I seized the moment, and the twenty yards were won. Here was a young tree with a fork, affording me an excellent rest. The pot-quaine stood with his round stern right to me; I took a deadly aim and fired; the ball entered very near his tail, and passing through the length of his vitals rested in his breast. He staggered about for a second, and then, bounding forward about sixty yards, halted and looked back to see from whence the deadly shaft had sped that had thus so unceremoniously disturbed his morning meal. The sights of my rifle were still fixed upon him, and just as he pulled up and exposed his full broadside, a second bullet left the ringing steel, and crashed through the very centre of the old fellow's shoulder.

On receiving this second shot the buck wheeled about and held after the does, but I knew from his movements that, though *his pace was good*, he had got the ball in his shoulder

and could not go very far. I then walked leisurely back for my shoes and shooting-belt, and, having found them, was loading my rifle, when the Bushman, who had been watching my stalk from the height above, joined me and said that the buck had run but a short distance, and lain down under a tree. I immediately stole carefully forward and saw him lying, his noble head not laid on the ground, but in an upright posture; fancying him still alive, and having too often been tricked with wounded antelopes, I then gave him a third bullet, but the dark form of this lovely inhabitant of the mountain quailed not to the shot, for the spirit of the sable antelope had fled. I was transported with delight when I came up and saw the surpassing beauty and magnificence of the invaluable trophy I had won; his horns were enormous, fair set, perfect, and exquisitely beautiful. I cut off his head, and, leaving men to convey the flesh to camp, held thither in advance, escorting my hard-won prize. On my way down the footpath from the fountain I found the untameable Mazeppa stretched to rise no more, and half consumed by hyenas and vultures; he had died of horse-sickness. My losses by the fell hand of death during this week were, alas! not confined to Mazeppa only; the pony I bought of my cousin Colonel Campbell died of tsetse, a valuable fore-ox died of some severe sickness, Fox, a very good dog, died of the African distemper, and three of my very best dogs had also mysteriously disappeared the day they chased the potaquaine.

On the 15th of November we left the mountains of Linguapa, Kapain and his Bechuanas held for Bamangwato; Seleka's Bechuanas for their chief; and we took a south-westerly course for the Limpopo, which we reached in less than three hours.

Next day I shot a waterbuck close to the river. In the evening I walked a short distance down the river's bank, and shot a lovely fawn of the serolomootlooque, and a buck pallah with a very handsome head.

On the 17th I wounded a white rhinoceros, but did not follow it, and in returning to camp started an ostrich off her nest; it contained twenty eggs, which I directed the Bechuanas to bring to camp.

As we held up the side of the river I killed a very fine old black rhinoceros standing among some wait-a-bit thorn, and, cutting off Borèlé's horn, rode home, my dismounted after-rider following me, for my stud of fifteen horses was now reduced to one.

In the course of the day I saw the fresh spoor of about twenty varieties of large game, and most of the animals themselves, viz. elephant, black, white, and long-horned rhinoceros, hippopotamus, camelopard, buffalo, blue wildebeest, zebra, waterbuck, sassayby, koodoo, pallah, springbok, serolomootlooque, wild boar, duiker, steinbok, lion, and leopard. This part of Africa contains a larger variety of game than any other in the whole of this vast tract of the globe, and perhaps more than any district throughout the world; for besides the game which I have just noted, the following are not uncommon, viz. keilton, or two-horned black rhinoceros, eland, oryx, roan antelope, sable antelope, hartebeest, klip-springer, and gryns steinbuck: the reitbuck is also to be found, but not abundantly.

We isspanned on the 18th before it was day, and trekked up the Limpopo for about three hours. In the forenoon Matsaca brought me a very fine leopard's skin kaross and an elephant's tooth, in return for which I was to score him to make him shoot well. This I did in the following manner: opening a large book of natural history, containing prints of all the chief quadrupeds, I placed his forefinger successively on several of the prints of the commonest of the South African quadrupeds, and, as I did so, repeated some absurd sentence and anointed him with turpentine. When this was accomplished, I made four cuts on his arm with a lancet, and then, anointing the bleeding wounds with gunpowder and turpentine, told him that his gun had power over each of the animals which his finger had touched, provided he held it straight. The chief and his retinue seemed highly gratified, and presently took their departure.

On the succeeding day we held up the river, and found the game extremely abundant; I counted no less than twenty-two rhinoceroses, nine of which were in one herd, feeding on the open plain. Late in the afternoon I got within shot of

four, and, resting my six-pound rifle on the trunk of a tree which an elephant had overthrown, took one of them on the shoulder and smashed his forearm.

On the 21st much rain fell throughout the day, rendering the country unfit for trekking. In the afternoon a loud rushing noise was heard coming on like a hurricane: this was a large troop of pallah pursued by a pack of about twenty wild dogs; they passed our camp in fine style within a hundred yards of us, and in a few minutes the dogs had fastened upon two of the pallahs, which my Bechuanas ran up and secured. One of these animals cleared a distance of fifty feet in two successive bounds, and this on unfavourable ground, it being very soft and slippery.

I left the sable antelopes' mountain mainly in consequence of a general falling off amongst my cattle, but did not then know to what cause to attribute this sad and to me all-important change in their condition. Alas! it was now too evident that nearly all of them were dying, having been bitten by the fly tsetse. The rains of the last three days had made this melancholy truth more apparent: the cattle presented a most woful appearance: listless and powerless, they cared not to feed, though the country was covered with the richest and most luxuriant pasturage; their whole bodies became daily more emaciated, and the eyes of many of them were closed and swollen. The next morning being fair, I inspanned, although the country was very unfit for trekking, and my poor oxen, as I expected, knocked up before they had proceeded three miles, many of them lying down and refusing to proceed farther, or even to stand up. I was obliged in consequence to outspan one waggon and leave it behind, and to bring on the other waggon with the able oxen, and then send them back to assist their dying comrades in bringing up the second. Soon after we had outspanned the second waggon heavy rain set in, which continued at intervals throughout the night.

Light rains continued to fall throughout the 24th. I, however, performed a short march, and brought my waggons a few miles farther up the soft rich soil that lies along the *Limpopo*.

Heavy rains fell at intervals throughout the next day. Ronoberg, a Natal ox, died during the night, and it was evident that many more would succumb in a few days; even now the half of them were utterly unfit to work. The heavy and continued rains made me feel my great misfortune with increased severity, for the country was hardly to be travelled with such loads as mine, even with oxen in good working condition. In this state of things I deemed it necessary to send a letter to Mr. Livingstone, the resident missionary at Sichely's, requesting the loan of two spans of oxen, and, having sealed up my epistle in a bottle, sent it off with two natives, instructing them to use all possible speed. One of these men was a native in my service, named Ramachumey; the other a subject of Sichely's, Seleka; they expected to reach Sichely in seven days.

For many succeeding days the rain still poured down, rendering it impossible to travel, and my oxen died daily of the tsetse-bite. In this condition my progress was slow and painful in the extreme, and I awaited anxiously the expected succour. At length I came fairly to a stand, not having sufficient oxen left to draw one waggon. I therefore formed a camp in a shady bend of the river, fortified it with a high hedge of thorny trees, and in a few days more all my cattle had died with the exception of two young oxen, which I inclined to think would survive the bite of the fatal tsetse.

On the 7th of December I resolved to have some fishing, and, routing out some old salmon-fishing tackle, sallied forth with one of the waggon whipsticks for a rod, and some string for a line. My bait was a bit of blue wildebeest, and, casting it in at a quiet bend of the river, I anxiously watched the cork, which very soon began to bob. I was not fated to live long upon conjecture as to what kind of fish I should catch, for the next moment I threw over my head a fine grey fish about a pound weight, in appearance like a haddock, with a broad mouth and eight or ten feelers. My Bushman said the Boers about the Orange River knew this fish, and loved to catch and eat it. After this I landed a second, and subsequently hooked a very heavy fish, which I lost. I doubt not but *most excellent* sport might be obtained in the Limpopo.



In the evening Carey and I cut down a thorn-tree to inspect the nest of a secretary. The summit of the tree was very wide, dense, and level, and from the terrible nature of the thorns utterly inaccessible without the aid of the hatchet. When the tree fell, out rolled a young secretary from its nest, and immediately disgorged its last meal, which consisted of four lizards of different sorts (of which one was a cameleon), one locust, one quail, and a mouse.

It was now twenty days since I despatched the natives to Mr. Livingstone to inform him of my distress, and solicit his assistance, and as they might ere now have reached me, if all was well, the delay caused me many painful doubts and apprehensions. Day after day was passing away, and my situation became more and more irksome and tedious; moreover, my supplies were fast coming to an end. At length, however, that aid which I so earnestly and fearfully prayed for was at hand.

On the morning of the 16th I suddenly beheld a civilised-looking native approach our camp; he wore a shirt, a pair of leather trousers, and a sailor's red nightcap, and carried a gun and shooting-belt. The instant I beheld him I said aloud, "Natives from Sichely." It was even so. Mr. Livingstone had at once in the noblest manner despatched men with his whole stock of trek-oxen to my assistance, and these I had now the inexpressible satisfaction to see reach me in safety. We inspanned at once, and continued to make good way for several days, reaching Kolubeng, the new residence of Sichely, on the 26th. In the morning that chief brought me two young oxen, which I all but purchased for an old saddle and two pounds of powder; but we split upon the cup of powder being level and not piled.

On arriving at Sichely's I despatched natives to Bakatla, to fetch two spans of oxen which I had left on my way into the interior in charge of Mr. Edwards, and with these on the 3rd of the new year we again inspanned. Our course for Bakatla was south-westerly, but owing to the position of the mountains we were obliged to make a very zigzag and circuitous march. The country here is the most pleasing I have seen in Africa,—beautifully wooded, undulating plains, valleys,

straths, and conical and tabular mountains of most fascinating appearance, invariably wooded to their summits, stretching away on every side.

We reached Bakatla on the 7th, which was looking extremely beautiful, being surrounded by very green fields of Bechuana corn. Here we remained a few days whilst I obtained fresh oxen, and then pushing on gained the river Molopo early on the 14th. Here I sallied forth to seek for reitbuck along its reedy banks, and while stalking upon two, suddenly observed two huge yellow lionesses, about a hundred and fifty yards to my left, walking along the edge of the reeds, holding a course parallel to my own. I then very rashly commenced making a rapid stalk in upon them, and fired at the nearest, having only one shot in my rifle; the ball told loudly, and the lioness at which I had fired wheeled right round, and came on lashing her tail, showing her teeth, and making the horrid murderous deep growl which, when angry, that brute generally utters. Her comrade, who seemed better to know that she was in the presence of man, made a hasty retreat into the reeds. The instant the lioness came on I stood up to my full height, holding my rifle, and my arms extended, and high above my head. This checked her in her course, but on looking round, and observing Ruyter slowly advancing, she made another forward movement, growling terribly. I felt that this was a moment of great danger, and that my only chance of safety was extreme steadiness, so, standing motionless as a rock, with my eyes firmly fixed upon her, I called out in a clear commanding voice, "Holloa! old girl, what's the hurry? take it easy; holloa! holloa!" She instantly halted, and seemed perplexed, looking round for her comrade; I then thought it prudent to beat a retreat, which I did very slowly, talking to the lioness all the time. She seemed undecided as to her future movements, and was gazing after me and snuffing the ground when I last beheld her. A reitbuck which I afterwards shot I bore to camp.

In the violent tempest, I may say hurricane, that visited us this day, my oxen strayed, and it was noon before any tidings of them were obtained. About midday some of the Bakatla

Bechuanas brought me one ox; it was Youngman, the last of the Mohicans. On beholding him a pang of sorrow shot through my heart; his appearance was worn and emaciated, and it was evident that soon the vulture and hyæna would leave his whitening bones to bleach upon the glowing plain.

Who then was Youngman, that he could call up such melancholy feelings? Youngman was the only dying survivor of thirty selected trek-oxen which I had chosen to accompany me into the far-interior, all of which I had seen pine away and die, and fail me in the hour of need. About two hours afterwards I had the satisfaction to behold all the missing truants recovered; they had been seduced away by some young oxen I had obtained at Bakatla, which seemed to have resolved to return to their former masters, perhaps not relishing old Adonis's treatment of them in the yoke.

We now held on to the Meritsane (rendered famous among sportsmen by Harris's glowing description of its charms), and found it full of water. Before reaching this point, however, I left the old-established Kuruman waggon-road about three miles from the drift, my line of march being to visit Mahura, chief of the Batlapis, residing about the sources of the Hart River; this route is by many days shorter than by the old road, and has also the advantage of being through a firm grassy country.

We held on for several days through a country abounding in game, and reached Mahura's town on the 25th.

On the following morning his highness made his appearance with about a dozen fine young oxen, which he said were to purchase powder, and after coffee I offered him six pounds for one of them, which he with much nonchalance declined. Being very anxious to obtain some good specimens of the large-horned oxen of the Kalihari, and Mahura being by report in possession of some, which he had lifted from the Bawangketse, I told him that if he would bring them up I would give him a good price for them. He said that he had cattle with large horns, and would send to one of his outposts for two oxen which would frighten me to look at.

In the evening these animals came; they were two immensely tall, gaunt, hollow-sided, remarkable-looking beasts,

and carried truly enormous horns. The head of one of them was very handsome; the horns were wide and fair set, going out quite horizontally for some distance on leaving the head: their width, from point to point, might have been about eight feet. This ox was roan-coloured on his face and along the top of his back; the other was red, his horns were thicker than those of his comrade, and were of good length, with very good points, but their sweep was not graceful. They were neither of them so thick as the horns of my red Wangketse ox, Rob Roy, which I left with Fossey, nor by any means so handsome; nevertheless, they were both very remarkable heads, but I would not deal with him, his drift being to get one of my best rifles.

On the 27th we marched for the Vaal River, distant a day and a half, and held on until sundown.

We resumed our march at daybreak on the 28th, and held on through boundless open plains. The country was thickly covered with immense herds of game, consisting of zebra, wildebeest, blesbok, and springbok; there could not have been less than five or six thousand head of game in sight of me as I sat at breakfast. Presently the whole began to take alarm; herd joined herd, and took away up the wind; and in a few minutes other vast herds came pouring on up-wind, covering the whole breadth of the plain with a living mass of noble game.

Bakalahari now hove in sight, running at intervals across the plain, bearing parasols of black ostrich-feathers, which they brandished on high to press on the panic-stricken animals. These fellows must have had good wind, for they held on at a steady trot, exactly like wild dogs (only that the wild dogs gallop and do not trot), and did not allow the game to get very far in advance. It was evident that they were driving it to a range of pitfalls in advance; but being without horses, and in extreme pain from a swelled ankle, I was unable to follow them up and ascertain their success. My ankle became daily worse. I had applied leeches to it at Mahura's, which helped me a little, but the number was too small to be of great benefit. I was now entirely unable to set my foot to the ground.

On the 29th we again set out, and in about three hours reached the fair, long-wished-for, yet much-dreaded Vaal River. I say much-dreaded, because, from the constant rains which had been falling, I had made up my mind that it was not improbable I might have to lie for many months upon the banks of this often impassable river. On this occasion, however, to my great satisfaction, and quite contrary to my expectations, I found the river low, and the drift, which I had never seen before, very good, and free from rocks or very large stones; the descent from our side was easy, but the ascent on the opposite was steep and muddy, and some smart showers of rain which had been falling during the last two hours had rendered it so slippery that I deemed it best to outspan, and defer taking the drift until the ground should dry a little in the afternoon, when I got my waggons through in safety, taking one at a time with twenty steady oxen.

We now made the Vet River, which flows into the Vaal a little above the drift, and followed its course towards Colesberg. Our march led us through vast herds of game, which I have before spoken of as frequenting the northern boundaries of the colony. On the 20th of February I crossed the Great Orange River at Alleman's Drift, and entered Colesberg next day; most of my old friends were still here, and also my redoubtable friend old Murphy, as wild and as jolly as ever.

I hired the old barracks during my stay in Colesberg, and immediately set about sewing up my trophies in canvas, and stowing them away in cases. This was accomplished in about fourteen days. A fortnight more was spent in preparing for another hunting expedition; I purchased a new wagon from a Mr. Emslie for a hundred pounds, a fresh stud of sixteen horses, a mule, a pack of twenty dogs, and a span of oxen from various parties in the town, and subsequently increased my stud to twenty. I also engaged as after-rider a Bushman named Booï.





## CHAPTER XXVII.

FIFTH AND LAST EXPEDITION COMMENCED—MASSACRE OF MY DOGS—  
BUFFALO SHOOTING—CROCODILE SHOT—AFFRAY WITH A LEOPARD.

ON the 19th of March, 1848, I left Colesberg with three waggons "well manned and stored," for my fifth and last cruise in the far interior. I was joined by a Mr. Orpen, a mighty Nimrod, who, notwithstanding my representing to him the dangers and hardships of an elephant-hunting expedition in their blackest colours, kindly agreed to favour me with his help and company on my lonely trip. We got clear of the town at about nine A.M., and commenced our march over a country which my reader must now be fully acquainted with.

The game became plentiful in about ten days after we left Colesberg, but when we came to the Vet River, I beheld with astonishment and delight decidedly one of the most wonderful displays which I had witnessed during my varied sporting career in Southern Africa. On my right and left the plain exhibited one purple mass of graceful blesboks, which extended without a break as far as my eyes could strain: the depth of their vast legions covered a breadth of about six hundred yards. In half a minute I was loaded, and, after galloping a few hundred yards, let drive into them, but was unsuccessful. Excited and annoyed at my want of luck, I resolved to follow them up and blaze away while a shot remained in the locker, which I did; until, after riding about eight or nine miles, I found my ammunition expended and not a single blesbok bagged, although at least a dozen must have been wounded.

It was now time to retrace my steps, and I took a lucky course for the waggons, for I came right upon them after they had outspanned on the bank of the Vet River. I could willingly have devoted a month to blesbok-shooting in this hunter's elysium; but having heard from a party of Bastards that the Vaal River was low, I inspanned, and continued my



march by moonlight. Lions were heard roaring for the first time during this night.

On the 22nd of April, after some trouble, we crossed the Vaal River, and on the 25th reached Mahura's. He was astonished to see me return so soon, and expressed much satisfaction thereat.

For many days back our oxen had been looking very spare, and fallen off in condition, and we now had the intense mortification to discover that nearly the whole of them were attacked with either tongue or hoof sickness. This discovery cast a sad gloom over our prospects. I was unacquainted with the nature of either of these maladies, and the Hottentots declared that an ox required months to recover from either of them and that they often proved fatal. In this state of things I deemed it prudent to begin to purchase young oxen from Mahura and his tribe, and I gave him to understand that I was willing to do so. The chief replied that his people would be unwilling to bring their oxen, because when I had last passed through his country they had brought oxen for barter, and I had purchased none of them; he, however, promised to acquaint them with my wishes.

Next day the chief, instead of coming to trade as he had given me to understand he would, held a hunting party with a number of his people on the old Scottish principle of the ring, a common and successful mode of hunting among the South African tribes: on this occasion, however, the ring was mismanaged, and the game broke through. Our oxen now presented a most woful appearance, the greater part of them being very lame, and nearly all more or less ailing. This was a most startling fact, and, as the Bechuanas did not seem disposed to bring oxen for barter, it threatened to oppose an insurmountable barrier to our progress either backwards or forwards.

Two hours elapsed after breakfast the following morning, and the chief not having made his appearance according to promise, Mr. O. and I went up to the palace to ask him what were his intentions in respect to the trading; he replied that he could not force his people to bring me oxen, but that he had intimated my wishes to them.

*Early next day Mahura again made his appearance, accom-*

panied by his interpreter and several of his people, bringing stout young cattle to barter for guns and ammunition. Having taken coffee, the chief called me aside, and, pointing out to me two good-looking young oxen, said they were his, and that if I would fill the measure he had brought with powder I could have the two oxen. When I beheld the wooden measure, I thought the chief was going to drive a hard bargain with me; but, on filling it with powder, I found that it held about eighteen pounds, and, as this was not an exorbitant price for two good oxen, I was very glad to get them. He and all his people seemed to think they had got a bargain, and, the example now being set, the trading went on rapidly; by sundown I had purchased twenty-two oxen, twenty of which were quite fit for work. In the forenoon Mr. O. and I went to look at the cattle (which we allowed to remain night and day in the veld), and had the satisfaction to find a decided improvement in them. We remained several days longer purchasing oxen, which, together with our horses, now amounted to one hundred and eleven, not counting our lame oxen, which we determined to leave with Mahura.

On the 3rd of May we again resumed our march for the far interior, steering our course across the boundless open plains which lie to the northward of the Hart River. On the 5th, having performed a considerable march, we halted about eleven A.M. beside a small fountain in a slightly elevated part of the country, where the grass was various, rank, and abundant, and, observing several vultures soaring over a cover within a quarter of a mile of the waggon, and thinking it very probable that they were attracted by some lion devouring his prey, I ordered a couple of horses to be saddled, and rode towards the place with one after-rider and about a dozen of my dogs. I was right in my conjecture; for, as I cantered along, I had the satisfaction to behold a majestic old black-maned lion walking parallel to me, and within a hundred yards: he looked so dark, that at the first glance I mistook him in the long grass for a blue wildebeest; next moment, however, he turned his large, full, imposing face to me, and I knew that it was he. Shouting to the dogs with all my might, *I at once dashed towards him.* The lion, as I expected, took

to his heels, bounding through the long grass at top speed. The dogs went at him in gallant style, I following not far behind them, and yelling to encourage my pack. The lion, finding we had the speed of him, reduced his pace to a sulky trot, the dogs barking within a few yards on each side of him; in half a minute more I had passed ahead and halted my horse for a shot, but looking round for my after-rider, who carried my rifle, beheld him slowly approaching, with pallid countenance, at least a hundred yards behind. The lion now faced about, and, springing on Shepherd, one of my favourite dogs, lay for several seconds upon him, and having bitten him so that he could not rise, continued his course. A few moments after he knocked Vixen over, and, having gained the edge of a small cover, came to bay in a thick bush; facing round, he lay down to await our attack. I then rode up to within twelve yards of him, and, halting my horse, ended the grim lion's career with a single ball behind the shoulder, cutting the main arteries close to the heart. On receiving the ball his head dropped to the ground, and, gasping for a moment, the noble beast expired. I dismounted, and, plucking a lock of hair from his mane, placed it in my bosom and returned to camp, having been absent barely ten minutes.

We marched again at sunrise, and at about ten A.M. I drew up my waggons beside the large pan where I had been storm-stayed for a week last season. On the march I shot a spring-bok, and next minute Booi came up to me, and said that on my firing, he had observed a lion stick his head up in the long grass in the vley opposite to me. I felt inclined to doubt the veracity of his optics, but sent him back, with instructions to bring eight dogs. Booi, however, thought the whole pack would be better, and returned with thirty.

I then rode direct for the spot where the lion was supposed to be, and, on drawing near, two savage lionesses sat up in the grass and growled fiercely at us. An unlucky belt of reeds, about sixty yards long and twenty broad, intervened between me and them, for they, perceiving their danger, at once dashed into this cover: then followed the most woful cutting up and destruction amongst my best and most valuable dogs. *In vain* I rode round and round the small cover, endeavouring

to obtain a peep at their adversaries, which would have enabled me to put a speedy conclusion to the murderous work within; the reeds were so tall and dense that, although the lionesses were often at bay within eight or ten yards of me, it was impossible to see them. At length one came from the cover on the opposite side, when I fired a shot from the saddle; and, though my horse was unsteady, I wounded her, when, with angry growls, she re-entered the reeds.

A number of the dogs, which had gone off after a herd of blue wildebeests, now returned, and, coming through the long grass, started a third lioness, which came growling into the cover and joined her comrades. This was the signal for my united pack to make a bold sally, when they were savagely met by the three lionesses, who knocked the dogs about with as much facility as three cats would have disposed of the same number of mice. For several minutes nothing was heard but the crashing of the reeds, the growling of the lions, and the barking and shrieking of the mangled hounds. Night now setting in put an end to this horrid work, and, with feelings of remorse and deep regret at my folly in not having at once called off my poor dogs, I wended my way to camp. On numbering the slain, three of the best were found to have forfeited their lives in the unequal contest, and seven or eight more were very badly wounded, exposing the most fearful gashes, from which several of them never recovered.

Before the day broke next morning, lions were heard roaring to the west; and, following the fresh spoor, we soon observed a yellow form on a barish spot two hundred yards ahead, which we knew must be the lion, and thither we rode at top speed. On seeing us, he raised his noble head, but quickly crouched down again, in the hope that we should pass him by unnoticed. Within twenty yards of him was a noble lioness with two half-grown young lions, and on nearing them they bounded up and charged for the cover to our right, the old lion displaying more cowardice than either his royal spouse or the young ones, and taking the lead at the best pace he could.

The game having thus retreated, I placed Booi at one end of the cover to keep watch, while I rode to the other

to beat up through the centre with the dogs. Twice I drew it unsuccessfully, but the third time the dogs found the lioness lying under a bushy tree, when I rode up and gave her both barrels behind the shoulder, which partially disabled her. My third shot entered close to the eye and blew away the entire half of her brain-pan. Booi and I then skinned the lioness, cut off her head, and returned to camp.

At dawn we heard lions moaning to the west, and, drawing the cover beside which I had found the lions on the previous day, I came upon two young lions, one of which, standing to give us battle, I finished with two shots: his comrade stole away, but after a sharp burst the dogs ran him to bay, when I rode up, and, dismounting, flogged the dogs off, and slew him with a single bullet in the skull.

Our dogs kept up an incessant barking during the night, and we imagined that lions were prowling around the camp. In the morning, however, we discovered that we had been favoured with the presence of far less illustrious yet more presuming visitors; a pack of audacious hyænas had visited our fireside, and, not content with cracking and swallowing the bones they found there, had eaten the table-cloth, the skin of a sable antelope, and carried off the lid of our canteen and two large camp-stools. One of these we had the good fortune to recover, minus the rheimpys; the other will probably be found in after years, and preserved as a Bechuana or Bushman relic.

On the 12th I drew up my waggons on the north bank of the famous Meritsane, and here I had the pleasure to find that, owing to a large tract of the country having been burnt by the Bakalahari some months previously, and favoured by the rainy season, a rich and verdant crop of young grass had sprung up, giving the undulating plains a fresh and vernal appearance. I was delighted on beholding this, for I knew that it would have the effect of attracting the game hither from all the surrounding parts, and I confidently hoped to fall in with elands, as they are generally met with by the foremost hunters in the vicinity of the Meritsane.

The spoor of buffaloes, zebras, blue wildebeests, hartebeests, and sassaybys was extremely abundant, and all of these I fell in with in very considerable herds. I had resolved, however,

not to disturb the country, for fear of starting any elands which might be there, and rode past, leaving them unmolested. After proceeding for many miles, I had the mortification to ascertain that only a very few elands now frequented these parts, and after a fruitless search for these few I turned my face for camp.

The next day I rode forth with one after-rider, and had proceeded but a short distance when I had the satisfaction to behold a magnificent herd of buffaloes quietly pasturing within half a mile of me on the opposite bank of the Meritsane. This was exactly what I stood in need of, considering the present low state of my commissariat in the article of flesh; and, accompanied by Mr. O., with two after-riders and a large detachment of the dogs, we resolved to deal death among the buffaloes. The score in the evening showed that we had not exaggerated our intentions, for I bagged five and Mr. Orpen two, making in all seven.

After breakfast two spans of oxen brought four of the fattest buffaloes to the waggon, and all hands were busy butchering and salting until sundown. In the evening I went out with my rifle in quest of a buffalo-calf, which had been left by the herd in the morning. On observing me, the young savage, to my utter astonishment, charged down upon me in the most determined manner; but my rifle was at my shoulder, and, covering his head until he was within four yards of me, I arrested him in full career with a ball in the forehead.

Three of the buffaloes we had shot having been left in the veld, I deemed it more than probable that a lion might be found on some one of them if sought for at early dawn; accordingly I rode forth with an after-rider and a troop of my dogs; and as I approached the third, the sudden rush of a flight of vultures over my head towards the buffalo told me that some occupant, which had hitherto kept them aloof, had that moment quitted the carcase; and this was the case, for, on galloping forward and clearing an intervening rising ground, I had the satisfaction to behold a huge and shaggy lion within two hundred yards of me, trotting slowly off towards the cover on the banks of the river.

I instantly rode at top speed to get my dogs clear of the carrion, and, if possible, bring the lion to bay before he should

gain any bad cover; we came up with him just as he gained a small belt of reeds, from which he sprang into the river's bed and stood at bay. Riding up within fifteen yards, I disabled him with a shot in the shoulder, and then went up to within twelve yards on foot, when I finished him with my second ball behind the shoulder. This was a fine old lion, with perfect tusks and a very beautiful coat of hair; and I ordered my men to flay him with the utmost care. Next day we reached Lotlokane.

In the forenoon, anxious to obtain a gemsbok, I saddled up my three fleetest steeds, and rode in a northerly direction, with two after-riders, taking with me a light single-barrelled gun. Having ridden a few miles, I entered upon a magnificent level park, thickly adorned with groves of thorn-trees, on which were grazing large herds of blue wildebeests, zebras, hartbeests, and springboks. Knowing that eland and gemsbok are generally to be found in the vicinity of herds of other game, I resolved to ride in a semicircle to windward of these, and carefully examine the ground for the game I sought. Having made a sweep for this purpose, we were slowly returning, when four superb elands charged up wind right in our faces. To these we instantly gave chase; and Booi, being up first, singled out the heaviest bull, which he broke from the troop, and drove towards camp. Coming up with the remaining three, I selected the best head, and, after a sharp chase, laid him low with a single ball in the shoulder. I then rode to assist Booi, who was about a quarter of a mile to windward on the plain below me; and cannily driving on the noble eland, which we succeeded in bringing right up to the waggon, I bowled him over with two shots in the shoulder. Not yet having a stuffed bull eland's head, and this being a fair specimen, I directed it to be cut off for my collection.

We now held on for the Molopo, upon the banks of which I had some fine sport with roan antelope and reitbuck, and on the 29th of May reached Sichel's kraal on the Kouloubeng.

On the 31st we again inspanned and held for the Limpopo, reaching my old drift on that river on the 15th of June.

On the 18th, the moon being full, I crossed the river with *Mr. Orpen*, Carey, and attendants, and made for the fountain

at Charebe, in the hope of enjoying some night-shooting with elephants; but we had the ill luck to alarm those frequenting this water and drive them out of the district. On the 23rd, as I was returning to camp from Guapa, the cries of elephants were repeated in different directions, and I at once knew that there must be a very large herd. Having ascended a lofty thorn-tree and obtained a view of the grey backs of some of them appearing above the underwood of the forest, I sent Ramachumie back to bring up the dogs, and, when they came, rode forward for a nearer inspection. It was a troop of upwards of a hundred elephants, but consisting entirely of cows and young bulls. Having endeavoured, for nearly half an hour, to select a good one, I crept in within fifteen yards of a fairish bull, and gave him a shot behind the shoulder: my followers, however, failed to slip the dogs or to bring on my horse, and while I ran back for them the elephant got away in the herd; the dogs attacked another bull, which, after a long chase, I rolled over. The elephant had scarcely fallen, when old Mutehuishe, with a party of Bamangwato men, came up like a flight of vultures in quest of flesh. The next day I shot another elephant.

On the 29th I crossed the Macoolwey, and on the march hunted ahead of the waggon, and shot a waterbuck and doe and started a troop of seven or eight lions, headed by a patriarchal-looking old fellow of unusual size. The next day brought the waggon to the Basileka. Here I shot two pallahs and a cow camelopard. We formed the waggon at my old camp, but, observing tsetse on the horses, I at once resolved to leave Seleka's on the morrow.

About midnight a huge lion made a most daring attack on my cattle-kraal, charging through the thick thorn-hedge: he sent the panic-stricken cattle flying in dire confusion, and dashed to the ground a valuable ox, which lay groaning in his powerful grasp. I was awakened by the noise, and, instantly directing a troop of the dogs to be let loose, the brute was put to flight. As to the poor ox, his fore and hind quarters were so fearfully lacerated that I was obliged to shoot him next day.

About nine A.M. I left Seleka's, and at sundown halted on the Limpopo, opposite Guapa. Here I remained for many



days, making successful excursions with Mr. Orpen across the river in search of elephants.

On our return from one of these expeditions we came upon a heart-sickening sight. The Bamalette tribe, through whose district we were now hunting, had been attacked and put to flight by Sicomy a few months before, when a large number of them were massacred, in consequence of which they had ensconced themselves in an elevated ravine in the mountains. We visited their deserted town and the ground over which they had been pursued and slain, and were horrified to behold the bleaching bones and skulls of those who had fallen; the wolf and jackal had feasted on their remains, and laid the long grass flat round each skeleton: hair and torn fragments of karosses lay scattered around, and the blood was still visible upon the stones.

On the 12th I had another hard day in the mountains after elephants, and at night watched a fountain and shot an old lioness. She came and drank within ten yards of me; the ball entered the centre of her breast and rested in the skin in the middle of her back.

On the 13th I held south for Charebe. In the evening the natives were all busy cooking the flesh of the lioness, which was excessively fat, and esteemed by them a particular delicacy. For my own part, although starving and so weak that I could scarcely walk, I could not persuade myself to partake of their repulsive repast. I left my coffee-kettle and other necessities, for the use of Mr. Orpen, on the far side of the mountain, and had since then been unsuccessful in the chase: after a little rest I mustered strength to saunter to the fountain, where I had the good fortune to shoot a pallah.

On the 25th of July at sunrise we held down the river, leaving three more of my stud behind me, two dead, and the other dying of tsetse. Holding up the river, on the following day, we took up the spoor of three old bull elephants, and, having followed it for five miles, at length got into a country so densely covered with locusts that the spoor was no longer visible; a large herd of elephants had, during several previous nights, been there feasting upon these insects. After a little while we made a cast in advance, again discovered the spoor

of the three bulls, and came up with them about an hour before sundown, in company with a noble troop of about fifteen other bull elephants. The wind being favourable, they were not aware of our approach, and whilst riding slowly round them on the lee side, endeavouring to select the best, a splendid old fellow broke across from my right, whose ivory far surpassed any other in the herd. To him I accordingly adhered, and laid him low after an easy battle, having only given him five shots. The tusks of this huge elephant being unusually perfect, I resolved to preserve the entire skull, and accordingly sent a messenger to camp for a waggon. Three days elapsed before this appeared, for it had to cross the Limpopo at a ford many miles above my camp; in the mean time, I occupied myself in preparing the feet of the elephant, which I preserved.

Returning to camp, I shot an unusually fine old bull giraffe, whose head I also prepared, and for several days hunted elephants in the forests to the east of the Limpopo with great success.

On the 7th we reached the village of Bakalahari, where poor Hendrick had been dragged from the fire and killed by a lion. I found the village deserted, and the spoor and dung of elephants on the spot where last season the natives were wont to hold their parliament.

On the 8th I held for the fine fountain called Seboono to watch for elephants by moonlight. In the evening a troop of twenty-two giraffes visited the fountain, also koodoos, zebras, and a princely old bull eland. I was surprised to see this eland come in, having always been led to believe that elands never drink. About an hour after nightfall several parties of rhinoceros made their appearance, and presently a low rumbling noise announced the approach of an elephant; on he came, a mighty old bull, carrying only one tusk. I had extremely hard work with him, the forest being dense and consisting chiefly of thorn-trees, and the sky overcast with clouds; at length, however, he fell, having received about twenty-five balls.

Next day I bent my steps for the fountain Pepe, where, in the preceding year, I had enjoyed such excellent night-hunting.

Here I followed the elephants with dogs and horses, as before, and was particularly successful, as also with rhinoceros and camelopard, &c. Some of these elephants were killed on very dark nights, when there was no moon, and the stars themselves were overcast by heavy banks of clouds.

By the 24th of August I had the satisfaction of making up my bag to a hundred and five select elephants killed in South Africa, and finding the district much deserted by these animals, we inspanned, and on the 3rd of September marched down the Limpopo towards the country frequented by hippopotami.

On the 4th I rode up the river, bagged one first-rate bull and wounded others. I saw several crocodiles, some of which must have been sixteen feet in length. Returning to the waggon in the evening, I heard Mr. O. engaged with a huge invincible old hippopotamus, and, finding that he had expended his ammunition, I attacked the bull, which I barely finished with six or eight more shots.

On the 5th we rode down the river and bagged seven very fine old specimens, two of which were bulls: one of these monsters received sixteen bullets in the head before I could finish him. In the heat of the conflict, a huge crocodile, attracted by the blood, suddenly made its appearance, and kept swimming round the hippopotamus in a state of great excitement, which with their united movements so agitated the broad river that considerable waves lashed the shores on either side; I slew the crocodile with a single ball, which crashed through the centre of his skull. On receiving the shot he turned over on his side, and remained motionless in that position for some minutes on the surface of the water, one fore and one hind leg being stretched out quivering in the air like a dying frog; after which he emitted a smell of musk so powerful as to cause the little Bushman to run shrieking from the bank, and then gently sank into his watery grave.

We rode down the river for several mornings hunting hippopotami, a great number of which we killed. As the tusks of some of these were very fine, we chopped them out of the jaw-bones, a work of considerable difficulty. On the 17th I was attacked with acute rheumatic fever, which kept me to my bed, and gave me excruciating pain; whilst I lay in this

helpless state, Mr. Orpen and Present fell in with an immense male leopard, which the latter wounded very badly, and the natives came running to camp and said that the former was killed by the leopard. On inquiry, however, I found that he was not really killed, but fearfully torn and bitten about the arms and head. They had rashly taken up the spoor on foot, the dogs following behind them, instead of going in advance; the consequence of this was, that they came right upon the wounded leopard before they were aware of it, when Orpen fired and missed him. The leopard then sprang on his shoulders, and, dashing him to the ground, lay upon him growling and lacerating his hands, arms, and head most fearfully; in a few minutes, however, the animal's strength failed him from loss of blood, and, rolling over, permitted Orpen to rise and come away. Where were the gallant Present and the natives, that not a man of them moved to assist the unfortunate Orpen? According to an established custom among all colonial servants, the instant the leopard sprang, Present discharged his piece in the air, and then, dashing it to the ground, rushed down the bank and jumped into the river, along which he swam some hundred yards before he would venture on terra firma. The natives, though numerous and armed, had likewise fled in another direction.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE LIMPOPO TO THE NGOTWANI AND  
BACK — SICHELY'S KRAAL — END  
OF THE FIFTH EXPEDITION — MEN  
DROWNED — CONCLUSION.

BOTH Orpen and myself were now reduced to a state of utter helplessness—he from his wounds, which were many and dangerous, and I from fever, though I was slowly recovering. It was of no use therefore to remain any longer in the



low-lying district about the Limpopo, so I resolved to hold  
for Sicheley's country. We accordingly marched on the 27th  
September, and on the 2nd of October encamped on the

bank of the Limpopo, a little above its junction with the Lepalala. Here Seleka's men requested me to halt a day, as their chief wished to trade with me, which I agreed to do.

Next morning Seleka arrived with a considerable retinue, bringing some good specimens of Bechuana arms to barter for muskets and ammunition. He made me a present of some Bechuana beer, and a sort of fermented porridge; this, he said, he considered as a gift, but he expected that I, in return, would give him some gunpowder. Such is the mode of making presents in Southern Africa.

In the afternoon I exchanged a musket for nine very handsome assagais, a battle-axe, and two shields of buffalo-hide. I also obtained other articles of native manufacture in payment for scarifying the arms of two or three of the nobility, and rubbing medicine into the incisions, to enable them to shoot well. Whilst performing this absurd ceremony, in which the Bechuanas have unbounded faith, I looked the initiated most seriously in the face, and said, in his own language, "Slay the game well; let the course of thy bullet be through the hearts of the wild beasts; let thine hand and heart be strong against the lion, against the great elephant, the rhinoceros, and the buffalo," &c.

On the 5th we marched at sunrise, and arrived on the 8th at the drift on the Limpopo where, on a former occasion, I had crossed the river. On the 13th we made the banks of the Ngotwani, but, finding its waters dried up, owing to the protracted droughts, and that it would be impossible to reach Sichely's country by this route, I determined to retrace my steps. We accordingly marched for the Limpopo, and reached it on the 23rd, having killed a noble old lion in my way.

We trekked along the banks of this river for the Mariqua, and a little before sundown fell in with two enormous herds of buffaloes, in all at least three hundred. Having shot one cow, I brought eight or nine fine bulls to bay in lofty reeds at the river's margin, exactly opposite my camp: of these I singled out the two best heads, one of which I killed with five balls, the other, though badly wounded, made off while I was engaged with his comrade.

*The next morning, when we crossed the river for some*

buffalo beef, a lion was discovered moving majestically from the carcase; and after a most exciting chace, in which I lost three of the dogs, we drove him into some reeds near the river, where for the first time I was enabled to give him a shot. My ball entered his body a little behind the shoulder. On receiving it, he charged growling after the dogs, but not farther than the edge of the reeds, out of which he was extremely reluctant to move. I gave him a second shot, firing for his head; my ball entered at the edge of his eye, and passed through the back of the roof of his mouth.

The lion then sprang up, dashed through the reeds, and plunged into the river, across which he swam, dyeing the waters with his blood; one black dog, named "Schwart," alone pursued him. A huge crocodile, attracted by the blood, followed in their wake, but fortunately did not take my dog, which I much feared he would do. Present fired at the lion as he swam, and missed him; both my barrels were empty. Before, however, the lion could make the opposite bank, I had one loaded without patch, and just as his feet gained the ground, made a fine shot at his neck, and turned him over dead on the spot. We landed him by an old hippopotamus footpath, and, the day being damp and cold, kindled a fire, beside which we skinned him.

This lion proved to be a first-rate one; he was in the prime of life, and had an exquisitely beautiful coat of hair. His mane was not very rank; his awful teeth were quite perfect, a thing which in lions of his age is rather unusual; and he had the finest tuft of hair on the end of his tail that I had ever seen.

On the 27th we reached the junction of the Mariqua with the Limpopo, when we once more bade farewell to the latter, and held up the northern bank of the Mariqua. This fine little river averages here about five or six yards in width, and meanders along in a very serpentine course through a very broad open vley, its banks being in many places destitute of cover, excepting reeds, and in others densely clad with groves of thorn and willow trees, &c. Here I found reitbuck, which does not frequent the Limpopo in those parts which I have visited. The country looked fresh and green, and all the







AN ATTACK UPON FOUR PATRIARCHAL LIONS.

usual varieties of game were abundant. About fifty miles to the south and east, a very bold and extensive rocky mountain-chain towered in grand relief above the intervening level forest. The length of this range seemed to be about a hundred miles, its course north-east, and it gradually became loftier and more rugged towards the north-eastern extremity. I believe the Linpopo rises somewhere to the east of this chain, and I felt a strong desire to follow it to its source, but under existing circumstances this measure was not advisable.

• Next day we held about eight miles up the river. On the march I wounded two black rhinoceroses and shot one sassaby and an enormous crocodile, which we discovered fast asleep on the grassy bank of the river. He got two balls, one in the head, the other behind the shoulder, yet nevertheless in the struggles of death he managed to roll into the water, and disappeared. I was extremely surprised to see so enormous a crocodile in so small a stream; his length was considerably greater than its width at the spot where I shot him.

On the 31st, as I was riding along the river's bank, I came upon a similar reptile lying asleep on the opposite side, which I shot dead on the spot, putting the ball through the spine close into the back of the head. Having crossed at a drift about a mile below, I rode up to inspect this hideous monster, which, to my surprise, I found to be the same one at which, on the 28th, I had fired, and as I supposed, killed. He bore the marks of both my bullets, one of which had fractured a part of his skull. This crocodile was a very old fellow, and a fine specimen, being upwards of twelve feet in length. Returning from skinning him to camp, I found the vley before me black with an immense herd of buffaloes.

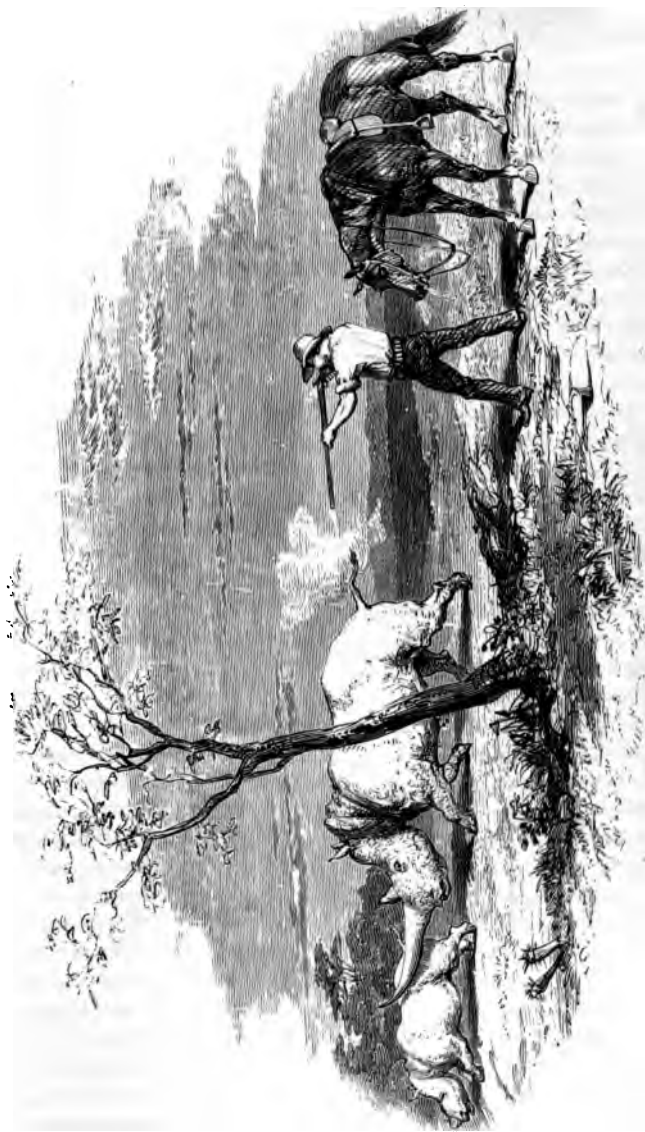
A few days after this four lions walked across the vley, a few hundred yards below my camp. All hands turned out, and when we came upon them I was much struck with the majestic and truly appalling appearance which these noble animals exhibited. They were all full-grown immense males; and I felt, I must confess, a little nervous, and very uncertain as to what might be the issue of the attack. When the dogs came up, the lions sprang to their feet, and trotted slowly *along the bank*, eventually disappearing in a peninsula formed

by the river, well sheltered by high trees and reeds. Into this retreat the dogs at once boldly followed them, making a loud barking, which was instantly followed by the terrible roar of the lions. Next moment, however, I heard them plunge into the river, when I sprang from my horse, and, running to the bank, saw three of them ascending the opposite side. One of them bounded away across the open plain at speed, but the other two, finding themselves followed by the dogs, immediately turned to bay. It was now my turn; so, taking them coolly right and left with my little rifle, I made the most glorious double shot that a sportsman's heart could desire, disabling them both in the shoulder before they were even aware of my position. Then snatching my other gun from Carey, who had come to my assistance, I finished the first lion with a shot near the heart, and brought the second to a standstill by disabling him in his hind-quarters, when he quickly crept into a dense, wide, dark green bush, in which for a long time it was impossible to obtain a glimpse of him. At length, a clod of earth falling on his hiding-place, he made a move which disclosed his position, when I finished him with three more shots, all along the middle of his back. The fourth lion made off. We then crossed the river a little higher up, and proceeded to inspect the noble prizes I had won. Both lions were well up in their years; I kept the skin and skull of the finest specimen, and only the nails and tail of the other, one of whose canine teeth was worn down to the socket with caries, which seemed to have affected his general condition.

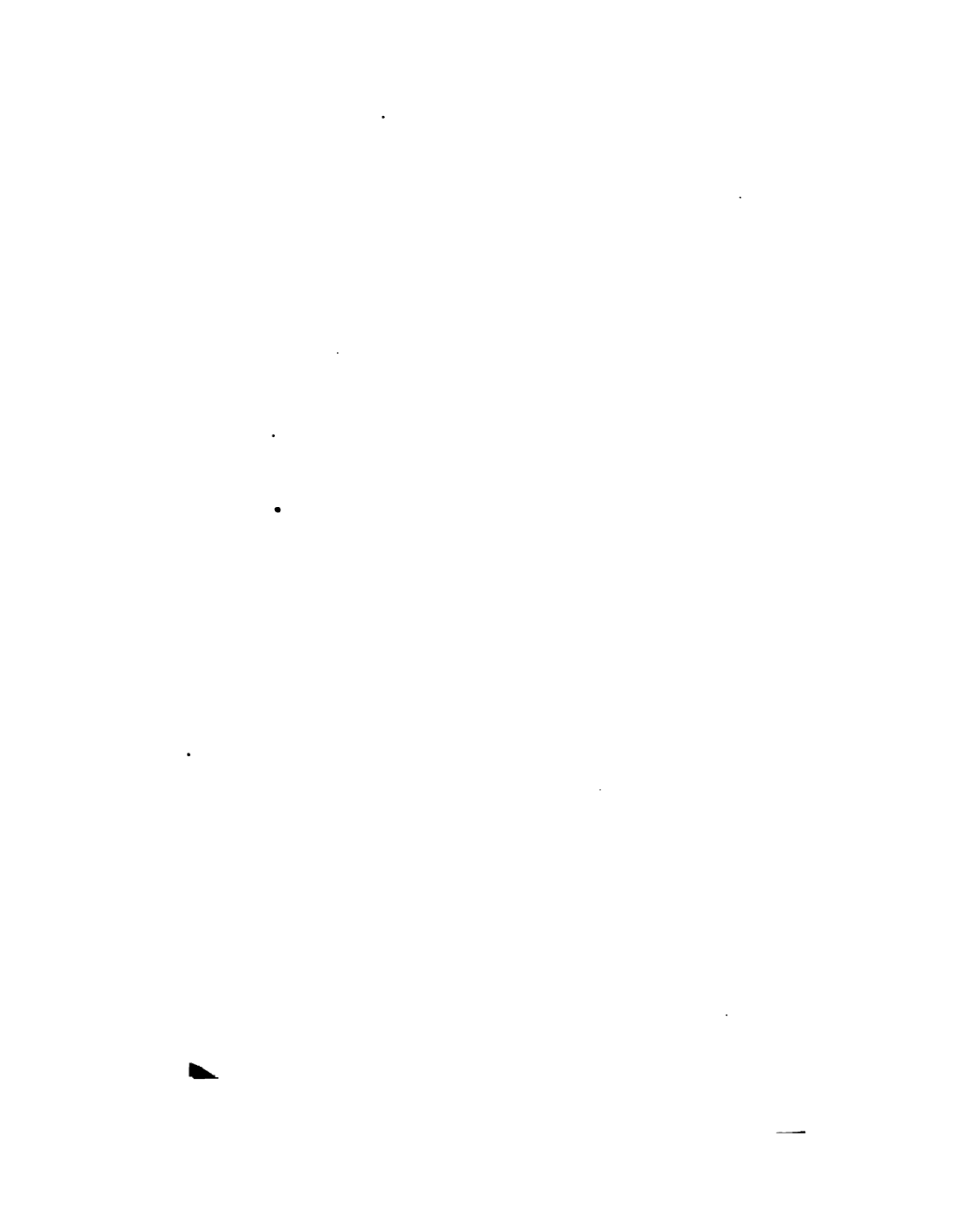
On the 9th it rained unceasingly throughout the day.

From the 10th to the 16th we followed up the banks of the river with the usual allowance of sport, killing a fine cow and bull rhinoceros, the former carrying an unusually long horn—the bull, judging by his dentition, had roamed during a hundred summers a peaceful denizen of the forests and open glades along the fair banks of the secluded Mariqua.

During our march on the 19th we had to cross a range of very rocky hills. We had now reached the spot where we were to bid adieu to the Mariqua, and hold a westerly course across country for Sichely. At sundown we halted under a



HUNTING THE WHITE RHINOCEROS



lofty mountain, the highest in the district, called "Lynché a Chény," or the Monkey's Mountain.

Next day at an early hour I rode out with Ruyter to hunt; my camp being entirely without flesh, and having had no other rations than very tough old rhinoceros for several days past. It was a cloudy morning, and soon came on to rain heavily. I, however, held on, by a fine well-wooded range of mountains, and after riding several miles shot a zebra. Having covered the carcase well over with branches to protect it from the vultures, I returned to camp, and, inspanning my waggons, took it up on the march. We continued trekking until sundown, when we started an immense herd of buffaloes, into which I stalked and shot a huge old bull.

Our march this evening was through the most beautiful country I had ever seen in Africa. We skirted an endless range of well-wooded stony mountains lying on our left, whilst to our right the country at first sloped gently off, and then stretched away into a level verdant forest (occasionally interspersed with open glades), boundless as the ocean. This green forest was, however, relieved in one direction by a chain of excessively bold, detached, well-wooded, rocky, pyramidal mountains, which stood forth in grand relief. In advance the picture was bounded by forest and mountain; one bold acclivity, in shape a dome, standing prominent among its fellows. It was a lovely evening: the sky, overcast and gloomy, threw an interesting, wild, mysterious colouring over the landscape. I gazed forth upon the romantic scene before me with intense delight, and felt melancholy and sorrowful at passing so fleetingly through it, and I could not help shouting out as I marched along, "Where is the coward who would not dare to die for such a land?"

In the morning we held for a fountain some miles ahead in a gorge in the mountains, near to which I bowled over one of three lionesses with four shots.

Showers of rain fell every hour throughout the 24th, and my men were employed in making feldtschoens, or in other words African brogues, for me. These shoes were worthy of a sportsman, being light, yet strong, and entirely composed of the skins of game I shot. The soles were made of either

buffalo or camelopard ; the front part of koodoo, or hartebeest, or bushbuck ; and the back of the shoe of the hide of the lion, hyæna, or sable antelope ; while the rheimpy, or thread, with which the whole was sewn, consisted of a thin strip of the skin of a steinbok.

On the forenoon of the 26th we held west, skirting the wooded stony mountains. The natives had here many years before waged successful war with elephants, four of whose skulls I found. In the course of the day I came upon a troop of six fine old bull buffaloes, and wounded one princely fellow very severely behind the shoulder ; he, however, made off with his comrades, and, the ground being very rough, we failed to overtake him.

Returning from this chace, we had an adventure with another old bull buffalo, which shows the extreme danger of hunting buffaloes without dogs. We started him in a green hollow among the hills, along the base of which we followed him, sometimes in view, sometimes on the spoor, keeping the old fellow at a pace which made him pant. At length, finding himself much distressed, he had recourse to a singular stratagem. Doubling round some thick bushes which concealed him from our view, he found himself close to a small pool of rain-water, just deep enough to cover his body : into this he walked, and, facing about, lay gently down and awaited our on-coming, with nothing but his old grey face and massive horns above the water, and these concealed from view by rank overhanging herbage. Our attention being entirely engrossed with the spoor, we rode boldly on until within a few feet of him, when, springing to his feet, he made a desperate charge at Ruyter, uttering a low stifled roar peculiar to buffaloes (somewhat similar to the growl of a lion), and hurled both steed and rider to the earth with fearful violence. His horn laid the poor horse's haunch open to the bone, making the most fearful ragged wound. In an instant Ruyter regained his feet, and ran for his life : this the buffalo observed, and gave chace, but most fortunately came down with a tremendous somersault in the mud, his feet slipping from under him ; and thus the Bushman escaped certain destruction. The buffalo rose much discomfited, and at this moment I managed to send



FURIOUS CHARGE OF A BUFFALO.



•

one of my patent pacificating pills into his shoulder, when he instantly quitted the field of action, and sought shelter in the dense cover on the mountain's side, whither I deemed it imprudent to follow him.

On the 28th one of my waggon-drivers chose to turn his waggon too short, in opposition to my orders, whereby it was very nearly upset, for which I administered a dose with the jambok. Two splendid camelopards fell to my rifle this day.

On the 4th of December we marched to the Ngotwani, and crossed the river after an hour of hard work in making a road down the banks. In the afternoon I again marched, and halted at sundown within a few miles of my old spoor near the Poort or Pass of God. Spooring this day for a wounded rhinoceros in a mountain-range to my right, and at length up into a long well-wooded basin in the mountains, I observed that two lions, having detected the blood, were also spooring up the borelé, and had then lain down for the day. I was within twenty yards of them before I was aware of their proximity, when they sprang to their feet, and, growling sulkily, trotted up the mountain-side. I only saw one of them at first, which, having ascended the steep a short distance, halted to take a look, giving me a fine broadside, when I shot him through the heart. On receiving the ball, he bounded forward, and was instantly concealed by the trees. I advanced cautiously, and next moment the other lion rose with a growl, and marched with an air of the most consummate independence up the mountain-side. I imagined that this lion was the one I had fired at, and I sent two more shots at him, upon which he disappeared over the ridge above. On proceeding to inspect the spot where the lion had been lying, I found that there were two beds, consequently that there must have been two lions, and I conjectured that I had killed one of them. In case, however, he should be only wounded, I deemed it prudent to ride down to the waggons, which were then passing below me, to obtain some dogs to pioneer. Having procured these, I and Ruyter returned to the spot, and found the lion lying dead on the mountain-side; we then proceeded to skin him, and returned to the waggons with the spoils. In the afternoon I rode on to Sichelý's kraal on the

the mountain-side to the southward of the  
canyon. I killed a zebra and a fine old buck as  
in the fall I was fired in five days. Accompanying  
me was a splendid skin and pel and finished  
skin. It was a most splendid specimen of  
mountain animal. Its horns were enormous  
rough and jagged. Having run off the head a  
man we covered him with green boughs, an  
animal which I suspected a party for the ve  
sion.

In the fall I was occupied during the month  
the head of the same animal, after which I re  
two after-midnight and finding a number of cows  
range of hills beneath which we were encamp  
came up a a hundred yards, about two hund  
man, and getting my rifle six inches of elevation  
the bullet caught him in the centre of the back  
shoulder and passed in the side on his opposite s  
his back and bounding high the rock-loving old  
started forward and was instantly concealed f  
by an abrupt rocky ridge. Having loaded, I  
saw a large bunch of his life-blood stained th

waggon spoor of '45, within a short distance of the bold gorge in the mountains in which my oxen had been chased by lions. In this fine pass two streams of water meet: it is a first-rate district for game when the country has not been ransacked by Griqua hunters. I immediately found the spoor of a troop of buffaloes; but the wind was foul, and they snuffed the tainted air. Returning from spooring them, I soon fell in with another troop, reposing under dense shade in the same glen, crept in within thirty yards of them, and remained for upwards of an hour, endeavouring to select the finest head. The buffalo which I wanted was lying down, his body screened by stout thorn branches. One by one they rose, stretched themselves, rubbed their horns upon the trees, and again lay down. At length something alarmed them, when the buffalo I wanted sprang to his feet, affording me a certain shot, but my cap would not go off. I then had a snap shot through the cover with my left barrel, and sent a bullet through his heart.

On returning to camp I found a party of Baquainas, among whom was a brother of Sichely's. These men informed me that the Boers had been making many inquiries concerning me, and had stated that it was their intention to come in force on horseback and take me prisoner. The Bechuanas, however, said further, that all the horses of the Boers were dead with the distemper. An attack from them being, however, by no means improbable, I deemed it prudent to hold myself in a certain degree prepared, and resolved, in the event of Mr. Edwards, the missionary at Bakatla, thinking the road by the Mamouri unsafe, to hold a more westerly course, and go out by the country of the Bawangketse. Another valuable black shooting-mare died of the fell distemper this day.

My casualties in cattle this year were very considerable. Up to this time fourteen horses and fifteen head of cattle had died; making my losses in the four expeditions into the far interior amount to forty-five horses and seventy head of cattle, the value of these being at least 600*l*. I also lost about seventy of my dogs.

We continued our march for several days through a country abounding in different kinds of game, affording good sport.

and on the 1st of January, 1849, I rode into Bakatla, where I found Mr. Edwards and his family flourishing. The news was that the Boers had met the Governor and the troops, &c., at a place called Boom Plaats, on the north side of the Orange River, and, after a bloody engagement of three hours, they had been defeated. Mr. Edwards stated that since this engagement the Boers had been flocking in about Mosega in great numbers, and were anxious to get possession of my waggons. He therefore advised me strongly not to proceed by my old line of march, but to get out of the country with all speed, taking the direct road across the mountain at the back of Bakatla. My prospects of doing this, however, were not heightened by an attack of fever the next morning, brought on by over-exertion and anxiety of mind.

On the 3rd we marched at dawn, and, after proceeding for many miles without finding water, had the pleasing prospect before us of not seeing any until the following day, when we might reach the Molopo. The sun's heat was most terrific, and my poor dogs were already on the verge of going mad; a number of my cattle were lame from hoof-sickness, and I myself was laid up with a rattling fever. Presently, to my great relief, we came upon sufficient rain-water for all the cattle. An attack from the Boers being not at all improbable, I ordered all my guns and rifles to be cleaned and loaded, and ammunition to be placed in readiness for action. I had also four good muskets cleaned and loaded, which gave me twenty stand of arms; and a volley from these, if well directed, in the open country, would I calculated keep off a whole host of Boers.

In the afternoon of the 13th I reached the Hart River, where I outspanned within a quarter of a mile of the town or kraal of the Batlapis. The river was greatly swollen and quite impassable, the rain having been very heavy in certain parts of the country.

In the morning, by Mahura's request, I crossed the Hart stream, and encamped on its southern bank. In the course of the day I obtained ten karosses in barter from the tribe, and one very good spotted cat as a present from the chief.

On the 16th I deemed it high time to be getting under way,

Mahura and his retinue not bringing any articles of value for barter, and asking absurdly high prices. Accordingly at an early hour I ordered my men to count my cattle and inspan, and in the afternoon we marched about six or seven miles nearer to the Vaal.

Considerable delay was caused next day along the line of march by young oxen, which could not be persuaded to trek, notwithstanding an unusual application of both whip and jambok. At nightfall we encamped on the bank of the fair Vaal river. It was considerably swollen, heavy rains having lately fallen; but, being upon the ebb, I deemed it well not to take the drift until the morrow; when, having arranged two trektows, we commenced crossing, one waggon at a time, with twenty oxen, and in about two hours my three heavily-laden waggons were brought through in safety. After two or three days' march we came in sight of several Boer encampments on both sides of the Vet River.

On the 24th our morning's march brought us into the district where in the commencement of last winter I had seen such overwhelming swarms of blesboks. Boers were encamped on the opposite side of the river. I outspanned beside some shady thorn-trees; lion's spoor was seen on the line of march.

We had now reached the point in our line of march where we were to take leave of the Vet River. After proceeding about a mile, I found myself out of the country of sweet grass, and entering upon bare and boundless open plains, thinly clad with sour pasturage, the favourite haunt and continual residence of innumerable herds of black wildebeest, blesbok, and springbok. I had been long away from them, far, far in the dense forest regions of the interior, and I now gazed once more upon them with a lively feeling of pleasure and intense interest which no words can describe: thousands upon thousands chequered the landscape far as the eye could strain in every direction.

On the 28th I rode in a north-westerly course, and gave chase to a noble herd of about two hundred black wildebeest; being very wild, I yached them on the Boer principle, and, taking a double family shot at about three hundred yards, one

fine bull bit the dust; this was very near camp, so I despatched Ruyter for men and a pack-ox to bring the gnoo to camp.

In the afternoon I inspanned and marched, there being very little grass, and danger of the oxen taking a horrible and very fatal illness, called by the Boers "snot sickness," which cattle are very liable to from pasturing on ground frequented by black wildebeests.

Next day the country was very heavy for the bullocks, owing to the rain which had fallen. Streams of blesboks passed our camp. In the afternoon we came upon an ostrich's nest, seven feet in diameter, which contained thirty-four fine fresh eggs. I left Ruyter in charge of the nest, the eggs being in danger from jackals and vultures, and particularly from the ostrich herself, who would have returned in our absence and broken every one of them. Having reached the camp, I despatched two men with leather sacks to fetch them.

Next morning I had some exciting sport, the wildebeests several times charging madly down upon the very spot where I lay concealed; I bagged four old bulls during the day.

On the 3rd of February we reached Bloem Vonteyn, where I was kindly received by the officers of the 45th and Cape Corps, stationed there. Here we remained a day or two, and then trekked on through a most desolate country, on which, together with vast herds of wildebeest, blesbok, and springbok, we found numbers of skeletons scattered over the plains on all sides. This great mortality had been caused either by famine or by a horrid mangy disease, called by the Dutch "brunt-sickta," which often sweeps off whole hosts of the plain-frequenter game.

On the 17th we halted the waggons at Mr. Fossey's farm, within two miles of the Great Orange River. Mr. Fossey informed me that the river was full, and that he did not expect it would be fordable for several months. Norval's Punt had been smashed when the troops crossed over to fight the Boers at Boom Plaats some months before, and the new one constructed in the colony had not yet arrived. I was detained on the banks of this stream, much against my will, for several weeks; but at length, on the 8th of March, hearing that the Boers had constructed a float above Alleman's Drift, I in-

spanned and proceeded down the river to view it. The float was rather a dangerous affair, and calculated to ferry over light waggons only; heavily-laden ones required to be off-loaded. At sundown I had taken over one waggon and a span of twelve oxen, which I ferried across in two trips, taking six at a time. The stream was rapid and deep.

Next morning when I looked at the river I found that it had grown greatly during the night, and was still increasing. Having off-loaded the greater part of the cargo of old Adonis's waggon, I managed to ferry it across the river, having narrowly escaped losing the whole in the middle of the stream. By this time the flood had increased so much that we deemed it dangerous to attempt to ferry over anything else, and we prudently resolved to await the ebbing of the river, which continued to grow rapidly the whole of the day and until the next afternoon, when it seemed to have reached its maximum, and about sundown it was evidently on the ebb. During the whole of to-day and yesterday the river presented an appearance of extreme grandeur; large blocks of wood and trunks of forest-trees were constantly sweeping past us, tossed on the troubled waters on their seaward course. In the course of the afternoon the stout new cable by which the float was worked burst asunder, being unequal to resist the force of the swollen river. On the 14th, with much difficulty, we got over the cable, and the Boers, by way of experiment, loaded her up with a party of Bechuana Caffres, and endeavoured to cross the river. When they had got about half-way across, the water rose partially over the float, when a panic came over both the Boers and Bechuanas, and a rush was made into the little boat attached to the float. A capsizing was the consequence; and at the same moment the rope which attached the boat to the float parted. The unfortunate men were then swept away down the rapid current; and of twenty-seven men who were on board the punt four only escaped. After this accident I directed my men on the opposite side of the river to inspan and remove down to Norval's boat, below Alleman's Drift, where I met them with the cap-tent waggon; and at sundown next day we had safely ferried over the other two waggons, and encamped once more on British territory.



The ferrying was a very laborious proceeding, each waggon having to be off-loaded, and then taken to pieces, and so brought over, bit by bit; the oxen and horses, &c., swam the river. My waggons were now reloaded, and at sundown on the 18th we entered Colesberg, and drew up opposite to the old barracks, having been absent exactly twelve months.

As my waggons advanced into the town the news of our arrival spread like wildfire, and multitudes both of men and good-looking young women rushed to see the old elephant-hunter, who had been mourned as dead. We were soon surrounded by nearly one-half the population, who mobbed us until night setting in dispersed them to their homes.

My friend Mr. Orpen, being blessed by nature with an excellent constitution, had considerably recovered from the dreadful wounds which he received from the leopard on the banks of the Limpopo, but was still, I regret to say, obliged to carry his arms in slings.

During my stay in Colesberg I had much pleasure in meeting my friend Mr. Oswald, of the Honourable East India Company's Service. He was then *en route* for the far interior, intending to penetrate the Kalihari in a north-westerly direction, and visit the lake of boats. This was an expedition which I myself had often thought of making, but a limited finance, and my fancy for collecting objects of natural history, led me to incline my course to the more verdant forests of the east, where I could more certainly first collect, and then export, the precious spoils of the elephant. Mr. Oswald being in want of draught oxen, I permitted him to select as many as he required from my extensive stock, with which he shortly set out, in company with Mr. Murray, on his interesting journey of discovery. I was occupied in Colesberg till the 12th of April, when I marched to Cuil Vonteyn, a farm belonging to Mrs. Van Blerk, which I reached in about three hours. Here I found nine waggons drawn up, which I had hired and laden up to transport my collection of hunting trophies to the sea. When I entered Colesberg I had almost made up my mind to make another shooting expedition into the interior, but a combination of circumstances induced me to re-visit my *native land*. I felt much sorrow and reluctance in coming to

this resolution ; for although I had now spent the greater part of five seasons in hunting in the far interior the various game of Southern Africa, I nevertheless did not feel in the slightest degree satiated with the sport which it afforded. On the contrary, the wild, free, healthy, roaming life of a hunter had grown upon me, and I loved it more and more ; I could not help confessing to myself, however, that in the most laborious yet noble pursuit of elephant-hunting I was overtaking my frame and too rapidly wearing down my constitution. Moreover, the time required to reach those extremely distant lands frequented by this animal was so great that it consumed nearly one-half of the season in going and returning, and I ever found that my dogs and horses had lost much of their spirit by the time they reached those very remote districts. My nerves also and strength were considerably shaken by the scorching African sun, and I considered a voyage to England would greatly recruit my powers, and that on returning I should renew my pursuits with increased zest.

Having thus resolved to leave the colony, I directed my march towards Port Elizabeth, by way of Graff Reinett, crossing the bold mountain-range of Snewberg. On the 10th of May I reached the shores of the ocean, which Ruyter and others of my followers, now beholding for the first time, gazed upon with wonder and with awe. On the 19th I took my passage for old England in the barque Augusta. My valuable collection of trophies and my Cape waggon, weighing altogether upwards of thirty tons, were then carefully shipped, and on the 7th of June I set sail (my little Bushman accompanying me) for my native land, after a sojourn of nearly five years in the wild hunting-grounds of Southern Africa.

THE END.

# THE LION HUNTER OF SOUTH AFRICA:

MR. GORDON CUMMING'S

ADVENTURES WITH THE WILD BEASTS

OF THE

FAR INTERIOR.

---

## EXTRACTS FROM THE PRESS.

"The author of this book, as became a kinsman and clansman of the chief of the house of Argyll, began life with a strong love for the field-sports of the Scottish hills, which seems to have grown with his years into a passion for hunting on a larger and still increasing scale, till at length nothing but the wilderness haunts of the antelope and elephant, the lion and rhinoceros, the giraffe and hippopotamus, could offer game to satisfy it. One result of this extraordinary passion is before us in a book of very rare and exciting interest.

"Furnished and equipped, and with a certain number of attendants varying from three to six, Mr. Cumming passed five years in the far African interior, amid all kinds of strange and beautiful varieties of the antelope of Africa; domesticated with lions, elephants, buffaloes, crocodiles, boas, leopards, tigers, wolves, hyænas, rhinoceroses, giraffes, and hippopotamoi; having no house but his waggon; often deserting even that, while his followers remained encamped around it, for hunting holes it could not penetrate; and passing days and nights alone, or attended only by savages, watching the majestic carriage of the lion, the sagacious actions of the elephant, and the curious or fierce instincts of countless varieties of beasts unconsciously disporting themselves in his immediate proximity, till with a sharp ring of his rifle their sports are closed for ever."—*Examiner*.

---

"We feel bound to say that we give entire credit to the truthfulness of the book, which is assuredly one of extraordinary interest. . . . The style is so natural and fresh from the scene, the scene itself in the far interior of Africa so new, and the hazards attending the chase of the formidable beasts of those wilds so great, that it is difficult to lay the book down until the issue of each adventure, as they rapidly follow one another, has been ascertained."—*Quarterly Review*.

---

"The gallant sportsman of the old legend who encountered the Wantley Dragon seems hardly a more formidable adversary than Mr. Cumming, of Altyre—a gentleman who laughs at lions, and saith to the hippopotamus 'Ha, ha!'—who rushes after *rhinocerosi* where the herd is thickest, and who takes even elephants easily—not to count by the score 'such small deer' as brindled leopards, quaggas, wildebeests, springboks, blesboks, gemsboks, and all other *boks*—gnoos, wild dogs, and giraffes. How dare critic weekly or critic quarterly march up to such a champion as this, and with his little penful of ink attack sports so sublimely savage as the above? If we do not 'draw in our horns' in dread of Mr. Cumming's 'Westley Richards,' it is at least prudent not to aggravate the hunter by further questioning,

but to take his book for what it is—a curious and characteristic record of feats accomplished such as few hunters have lived to tell.”—*Athenæum*.

“ Sport and the free life of the hunter, not geographical description or discovery, were the objects of Mr. Cumming; and he enjoyed them to the fullest extent. In the neighbourhood of the British frontier various kinds of antelopes, and those strange African animals that often combine in themselves the features of horse, ox, and stag, were rife. As he advanced, buffaloes, hyænas, leopards, lions, rhinoceroses, giraffes, elephants, and at last, upon the banks and in the waters of the far Limpopo, the hippopotamus and crocodile, rewarded his exertions. And these not few and far between, but in numbers which made his attacks upon the noblest game look more like a battue than hard-working sport. Mr. Cumming has knocked over half-a-dozen elephants or more at a time, chased and slaughtered camelopards in like manner, killed and carried off hippopotamuses as men do deer at home; and grew so bold that two or three lions were less to him than an overdriven ox to a London Alderman. He met the kings of beasts in open plain, rode with them, at them, across them, and round them, in the execution of his tactics; knocked them over right and left—and, like Coriolanus among the Volscians, alone he did it.

“ The novelty of the sports and the variety of adventure impart, of course, considerable interest to the book; but its great attraction is its freshness and nature. As soon as the reader finds himself across the frontier, he feels himself in a new region. The animals, the vegetation, the scenery, the modes of living, are all novel and striking—‘free as Nature first made man;’ and the very faults of Mr. Cumming tend to bring out the qualities of his subjects. The closest approach to him in subjects and adventure is Major Harris; though we think Mr. Cumming has the advantage in the wildness and freshness of his scenery.”—*Spectator*.

“ *Waterton's Wanderings* were suspected, *Baron Munchausen* was doubted, and *Mendez Pinto* was utterly disbelieved. But Mr. Cumming has outdone them all, and, what is better, has brought his trophies in proof. Burchell, with his waggon, sinks into insignificance when compared with this stalwart and kilted Celt; and the Black Cumming of the days of Robert the Bruce will hardly transmit a more noted name to future generations than the mighty Nimrod of our age, the greatest of hunters, the Hercules of African exploit, to whom hydras, elephants, lions, and other monsters, were but as snipes, hares, and rabbits to common men. . . . The fearless courage and intrepidity of our countryman shine brilliantly through the trying positions into which he was thrown, and show the pluck of a national character which it is not easy to vanquish in endurance or war.”—*Literary Gazette*.

“ Mr. Gordon Cumming's collection of trophies, won in mortal combat by himself from the monsters of the deserts of Southern Africa, still continues one of the marvels of the metropolis, and still draws the curious and the contemplative to his Museum. If Mr. Cumming had not brought over the spoils which constitute his exhibition, and demonstrated by these most irrefragable proofs his powers as a sportsman among such primeval quarry, the vivid descriptions he has given of his encounters with the lion, the tiger, the elephant, the hippopotamus, and other victims of his ardour as a Nimrod, might, in this age of doubting, have been regarded with something of the detraction that attends all heroic actions till they have been hallowed by time. We might have looked coldly on his book if we had not seen his collection, or we might have misprized

his collection if we had not read his book. But as it is, there is no resisting such evidence of almost superhuman daring and endurance as is here piled up before us, in the saloon crowded with all that remains of those who were once lords of the desert and forest; and the walls tapestried, not with the ingenious work of man, but with the rich patterns of nature's handiwork, torn from the wildest and most gigantic monsters yet left on the earth. Seeing, in this case, is indeed believing; and those who wish to know how 'sport' can be dignified into heroism, and what may be effected by indomitable courage and a perseverance almost superhuman, cannot do better than pay a visit to the 'South African Exhibition.'—*Morning Chronicle*.

"Had Mr. Gordon Cumming lived some two or three thousand years ago on those shores of the Mediterranean which were first civilised, he would have been immortalised as Hercules. Certainly he has performed more than one of the twelve wonders that immortalised that hero. The Nemean lion was but one. What would Hesiod have said to four lions or to half-a-dozen elephants *bogged* in a day's sport? But Mr. Cumming had his rifles, nay, his revolvers, if he pleased, whereas poor Hercules was reduced to his club, or at best a Boejeman arrow.

"Mr. Cumming is not a mere slaughterer, as the gentleman at home who bags pheasants. He has asserted and obtained dominion over the beasts of the field—has no doubt both inspired and instructed the native races in the manner and the hardihood required to subdue them. The lion, however respectable and amiable, is evidently doomed to disappear before the advance of that humanity of which Mr. Cumming is the pioneer. And to those who accuse him of butchery, he might retort—are ye treating the aborigines of New Zealand with greater mercy? There is considerable pleasure and excitement to be derived from this book and from the Exhibition connected with it; and having experienced both, we should be sorry to set them down as the result of brute taste. Moreover, we have observed with what greedy pleasure boys swallow these recitals. We have seen 'Robinson Crusoe' itself thrown away for Gordon Cumming, such is the superior power of reality. And we should say that a cheap edition would make the book universally known and universally a favourite. Taken in conjunction with the Exhibition, there is a large and useful lesson in natural philosophy to be gleaned from them; and not a few of our preconceived notions are overthrown or corrected by the joint perusal and inspection."—*Daily News*.

"How far Sir W. C. Harris's adventures may have stimulated Mr. Gordon Cumming to beat the same ground does not appear; but we are bound to say that, as far as actual slaughter and perilous adventure go, the author of the book before us has entirely eclipsed his predecessor. Harris was an epicure in South African sport—Cumming is a *gourmand*. Nothing is too vast for his furious appetite—no obstacles are permitted to stand between himself and the indulgence of his fierce craving. He seeks the monsters of the desert in their chosen haunts and lairs, bids them defiance, and stakes his existence upon the issue of an encounter. He does not quail at the sight of half-a-dozen lions—he does not refuse to fight because of the obvious numerical superiority of his foe. Opposing stratagem, patience, daring, and a just confidence in his weapons, to the terrible strength of his enemy, he goes in for mischief, and never quits the field until he can carry away the *spolia opima*. We go into a country gentleman's house, and we bow with deference to the enormous antlers which grace the hall of his ancestors—trophies of their deer-stalking skill,—we walk into the stable, and look with respect at the fox's head nailed to the door. What then must be the emotions produced by

entering the museum, where enormous skulls, horns, skins, tusks, &c. &c., attest the exterminating power of Mr. Gordon Cumming's rifle? There is no mistake about this gentleman's exploits—the evidences are before all who dwell within reasonable distance. . . . Mr. Cumming entered the East India Cavalry some years ago to enjoy India sport. He then went into her Majesty's service to shoot in the Canadas and at the Cape: but he found that the Queen only employed men to shoot their kind when necessary, and that the restraints of the barrack, and the limited leave allowed to officers, were fatal to his ravenous thirst for the blood of wild animals. He therefore abandoned the army to its fate, and commenced his single-handed campaigns against the denizens of the desert. If a medal and clasps were awardable for such field-services, Mr. Cumming's breast would be covered with glittering distinctions."—*United Service Gazette*.

"If we wrote about this most extraordinary work in the spirit of enthusiasm with which we were inspired by the perusal of it, we are certain we should be suspected of labouring under an access of intemperate exaggeration. We have never read any literary production recounting the most daring and dangerous sporting adventures equal to it, and we doubt whether there exists in civilized or savage communities a greater hunter of the hills, forest, and desert, than Gordon Cumming. His head should be examined by Dr. Elliotson or Erasmus Wilson, and if it do not present the largest mound, thrown up by the organ of destructiveness, ever seen, then there is no faith in phrenology. A Highlander born and bred, even whilst yet a schoolboy, this 'lion-hunter' (by that well-earned epithet he is widely known) had committed great slaughter amongst the salmon of the rivers that dash into the Moray Firth and estuaries of North Britain, and amongst the roe of his native mountains. The seminary of Eton received him, the greatest of her boy-Nimrods. From the quiet of college he is transferred to the bustle of Indian military life; and, chopping and changing from one regiment to another, he finally takes service in the Cape Rifles. Finding no employment for his sword, he sells out, and with a park of artillery, in the shape of grooved double and single rifles, manufactured by Westley Richards, Moore, Purday, &c., with teams of bullocks, a waggon, ammunition, other stores, and some native followers, he penetrates Southern Africa farther than any other European ever did, and in his journey slays with his own hand a greater number than ever man did in the time, of lions, lionesses, leopards, elephants, rhinoceroses, crocodiles, hippopotami, wild boars, zebras, antelopes, *et hoc genus omne*, together with ostriches and other tropical birds. In this great Nimrodian campaign he encounters privations and dangers, the recital of which sorely shakes our sedentarily occupied nerves."—*Bell's Life*.

"Mr. Cumming the lion-killer has been himself a 'lion' of late. His book has created much curiosity concerning him, and much discussion in reference to the wonders he relates. His travels into the interior of South Africa—what he saw and did there—make a series of adventures so unlike all else that has been written upon the subject, so exclusively sporting, so marvellous, and so probable withal, that he necessarily becomes 'an object of interest' to his reader, and we had not dived far into the book before we longed to cast our eyes upon its author. . . . We must not attempt to give anything like a notion of what Mr. Cumming's work contains. He buys three waggons, and puts twelve oxen to each. He engages Hottentot and other servants, and with every preparation that precaution can suggest and money provide, he sets out from the Cape of Good Hope for the far interior of South Africa, meeting and overcoming difficulties calculated to vanquish the bravest and most enthusiastic sportsman, and eventually

pushing his way into forests which even savages seldom penetrate, and regions where white men have never before been seen. To these sequestered spots wild beasts have retired for the loneliness they love, and here the rifle brings hundreds of them to the dust. The hunter gives a kind of diary of his dangers and trials, his occasional disappointments, and numerous successes. There is a straightforward and manly honesty about his story which puts aside all doubts as to his veracity, and you believe him when he tells of the slaying of lions, elephants, rare antelopes, rhinoceroses, hippopotami, and other quadrupeds, as though they were hares and rabbits, just as much as you do when he describes his intense fright and his shrill cry upon unexpectedly coming face to face with an old lion. There is not a sportsman but will read his book from first to last with intense gratification. Mr. Cumming is no idle boaster, for he does not make the most of his achievements, but merely reports facts and circumstances. There is a remarkable absence of all commentary and speculation; indeed there is but little room for such indulgence on his past events, and most of them are thrilling, and follow each other in rapid succession."—*Bell's Messenger*.

---

"The author of this book is one of the most extraordinary hunters we ever heard of. Indeed, we have some doubt whether he has not surpassed Nimrod himself. The great hunter of old could not certainly be such a crack shot—that we are sure of; but we even doubt whether, if he ever had written a book, he could have given so complete an illustration of the preponderating organ of destructiveness. Did we not know Mr. Cumming to be a veritable Scotsman of ancient family, and had we not the very best proof of his veracity in the spoils he now exhibits in London, we would have been disposed to trace some very close family connection between him and Baron Munchausen. We have seldom perused a book so full of the wild excitement of the chase, so stirring and effective in all its details, containing so many instances of extraordinary courage and self-possession. . . . The book, we anticipate, will be a popular one. It is much more spirit-stirring than any modern fiction which has lately secured the much-contested favours of the book-buying and reading public."—*The Scottish Press*.

---

"From his earliest years Mr. Cumming was an enthusiastic lover of natural history and of field-sports. As he advanced in life this predilection increased; the love of adventure became more deep-rooted—induced wanderings by wood and stream, moor and mountain; and 'Nature in her wildest mood' seems to have had the greatest attractions for him. 'My greatest possible enjoyment,' says he, 'was to pass whole days, and many a summer night, in solitude, where undisturbed I might contemplate the silent grandeur of the forest, and the ever-varying beauty of the scenes around.' The future African traveller is seen here in miniature.

"Mr. Cumming, with his axe and his spade, was the first to make way into the interior of the Bamaugwato country—spending years in the wilderness, with his wagon for his home, and attended only by savages. 'Days and nights on these occasions,' says he, 'have I passed in my solitary hunting-hole, near some drinking-place, watching the majestic carriage of the lion, the sagacious actions of the elephant, and the curious instincts of the game that have passed within a few yards of me, quite unaware of the proximity of man.' . . . This work requires no recommendation from us. It cannot fail to be extensively read, and must gratify all to whom the sports of the field, or the bold and daring adventure of the hunter, have any charm. The work is got up in the first style of the art, and enriched with numerous illustrations, which are remarkably well executed."—*Irish Paper*.

